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DISCIPLINE & DRILL

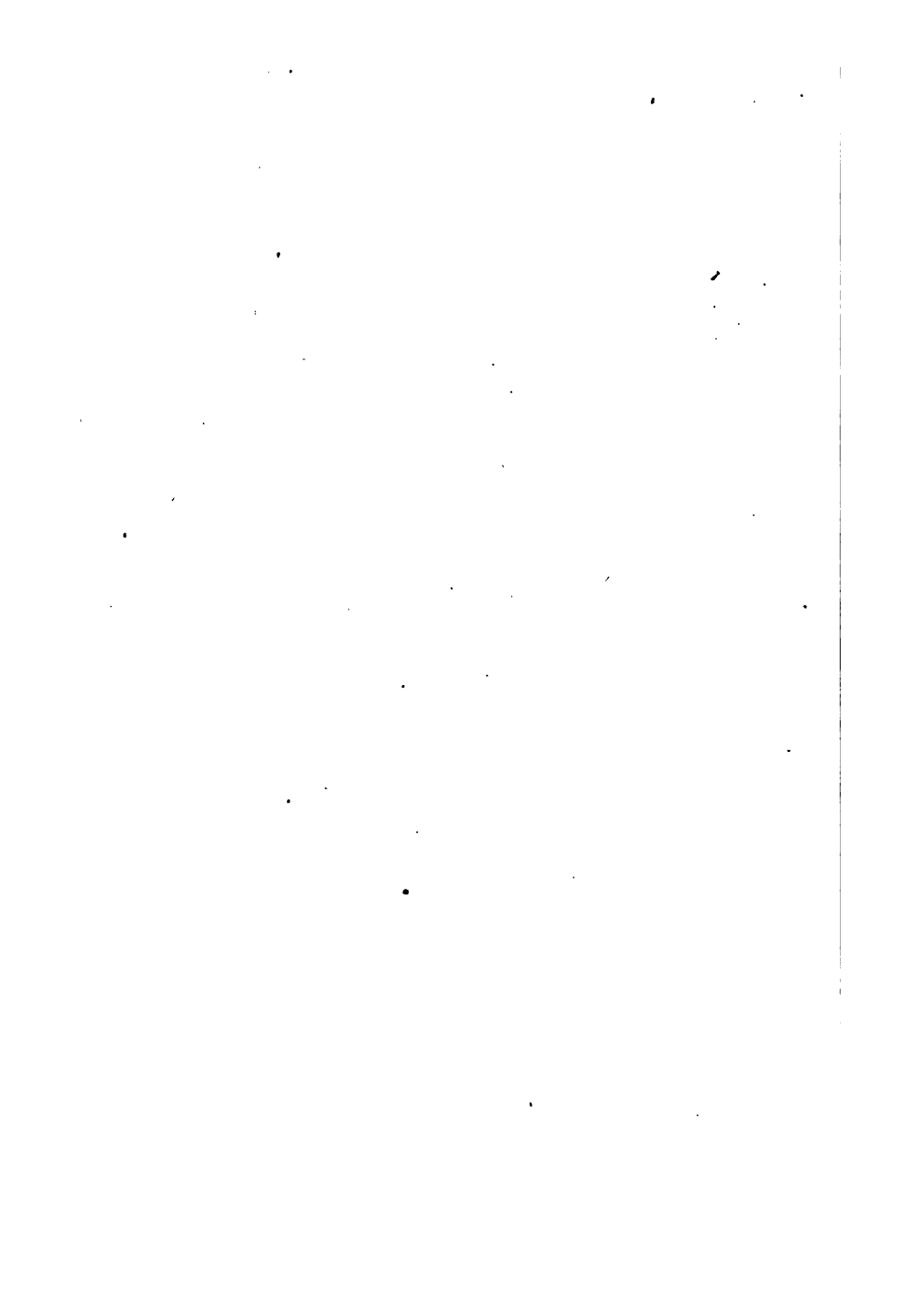


CAPTAIN. S. FLOOD PAGE



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DISCIPLINE & DRILL

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DISCIPLINE & DRILL

LECTURES DELIVERED TO THE
OFFICERS AND NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS OF THE
LONDON SCOTTISH RIFLE VOLUNTEERS

BY

CAPTAIN S. FLOOD PAGE

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PREFACE.

THE REGULATIONS for the Volunteer Force say : ‘ An adjutant is appointed to give instruction to the Volunteers.’ These Lectures are an attempt to instruct the regiment for which I am responsible ; they are printed with the sanction of my Commanding Officer. They are published in the hope that they may lead some Volunteers to take a higher view of the duty to which they are sworn ; that they may induce some young men to join the Volunteer Service ; that they may cause some men who are past the military age to support this national force by their purse and influence ; and that they may even perhaps persuade some of our military opponents to think better of our capabilities—better of us as material to be worked into shape ; and, instead of writing

us down and trying to get rid of us, may induce them to join their many comrades who offer us a willing and ready hand, and assist us in our earnest endeavour to make ourselves fit to stand with them shoulder to shoulder, should the country ever require our services. I lay no claim whatever to originality, for I have borrowed freely from a great many sources. I have tried to indicate from whom I have borrowed in nearly every instance. If I were to commence apologising for the character of my work, I should require greater space than I have at my disposal, for I am deeply conscious of its defects. 'I forbear to stile my readers gentle, courteous, and friendly, thereby to beg their good opinions: for it is certain, let us claw the reader with never so many courteous phrases, yet shall we be evermore thought fools that write foolishly.' *

S. FLOOD PAGE.

July 12, 1871.

* Sir Walter Raleigh.

CONTENTS.

LECTURE I.

Introduction—Arguments for a General Scheme of Instruction—Necessity of Officers learning Squad Drill with exactness—Importance of Discipline—Position of the Soldier at Drill—The Salute—Relations between Officers and Men—Skirmishing Drill .	PAGE 1
--	-----------

LECTURE II.

Wasting ammunition—Necessity of Volunteers saluting all Officers in uniform—Uniform—' Straggling '—Marching : ' legs and feet ' in war—When and where Volunteers will be of service—Necessity for Reorganising the Service—Alterations in the new Drill Book — Height of Recruits — Intelligent Execution of Orders	36
---	----

LECTURE III.

What is Discipline?—Laxity of Discipline in the Volunteer Service—Rarity of Insubordination among Volunteers — Adverse criticisms on the system—Are they just?—Inefficiency of the Army—Incident at Brighton—' Beery jollity ' at Brighton—Straggling and marching at Brighton—Unity in the London Scottish Rifles	71
--	----

LECTURE IV.

	PAGE.
Effects of the recent Examinations—Recruits and Resignations—Importance of Simplicity in Drill—French and Prussian drill movements—‘Studies on the Recent War’—Principles of Military Science are fixed—Their application varies—Prussian and English ‘companies’ compared—Defeat of the Prussians at Langensalza—A national Volunteer Uniform—First experience of breechloaders—Skirmishing fire, quick fire, and volley fire—Importance of the Yeomanry Cavalry—Outpost and picquet duty—Shelter-trench drill—Equipment and Stores—‘The Battle of Dorking’—Concluding observations	106

I.

DISCIPLINE AND DRILL.

A Lecture delivered to the Officers and Non-commissioned Officers of the London Scottish R. V., March 15, 1871.

I NEED hardly say that the main object we had in view in working together at the field exercise and rifle exercises, during the autumn, was that you might be prepared to pass the examination which officers of the Reserve Forces and sergeants of Volunteers are now permitted to pass.

But this has not been our only object, for we have worked together in a similar manner before there was any examination for which to prepare. One object has certainly been that we might learn the new drill, so as to be able to drill and teach those under our command. Our study has been close; and I suppose that many of you feel that you

have obtained a more complete mastery of the details of our regulation drill than you ever previously possessed. There is one satisfactory feature about this examination—which we must bear in mind is not obligatory but only permissive—that will go far to disprove the reckless assertion that has been so often repeated that it has gained some amount of credence; it will show that not only have not Volunteer officers been content to know little or nothing of their duty, but that no sooner has the opportunity been afforded them of having their knowledge officially tested, than they have come forward in numbers far exceeding the expectation of their most sanguine friends, and have, so far as this examination may be taken as proof, demonstrated their fitness, efficiency, and zeal.

It is, I think, unfortunate that there has not been any fixed system on which the examinations have been conducted: one examining officer demanding one thing, another demanding another; some laying great stress on drill, others on musketry, and others on both. I think there should have been some standard

of examination, for there can be no doubt that some officers have been plucked in one place, who would have been passed in another; and some have been called to pass through an ordeal incomparably more severe than others. One fixed standard and one fixed system would be fairer, and at the same time afford a truer test of the knowledge and qualifications of those examined.

While our drill classes were in progress, I was asked whether I would give some lectures, as I had done some few years ago. I answered that I had made some notes, and that, as the winter went on, I would try whether I could write one or two lectures bearing on the discipline and drill of a regiment, such as our own.

In redemption of this promise I have invited you here this evening. While speaking to the officer with whom I held the above conversation, I suggested that it would be of the greatest advantage to officers of the Reserve Forces if a course of lectures were delivered annually by the best soldiers we have got, on such subjects as tactics, strategy, and outpost duties. From such an arrangement much good would come;

and the earnest craving of Volunteer officers for instruction in that which they ought to know, and should therefore have a chance of learning, would be in great measure satisfied.

During the winter evenings, Volunteer officers would gladly study the higher branches of the military profession, if the opportunity were afforded them. If, for instance, Colonels Chesney, Hamley, and Fletcher, Captains Majendie and Hozier, and others, were to give lectures on such subjects as I have suggested, we should find great efforts made on the part of Volunteer officers to attend; and if systematic instruction in the field could be arranged for some half-dozen Saturdays in the months of May and June, opportunity would be afforded of carrying out practically that which during the winter they had learned theoretically; and, be it remembered, the less disciplined the troops, the greater necessity is there that the officers should be highly trained.

I may remind you that when first we began to work in the early part of the autumn, I urged the whole of you to work up for your examination with me, and with each other,

saying that I thought you could learn what was necessary for the examination quite as thoroughly at our own head-quarters as at any of the schools for Reserve Forces. This is no longer the case. I hear from those who have recently attended these schools that the course of study now followed includes lectures by the Garrison Instructors to those under instruction. This being the case, I unhesitatingly declare that, in my opinion, even those of you who have obtained certificates of proficiency will do well, and learn not a little, if you can spare the time, and go through a course at the school, coming back with a school certificate.

But if you do this, go to Aldershot, where the facilities for instruction are greater than elsewhere, and where our Honorary Colonel is having outpost duty taught systematically, thoroughly, and well. This will do you more good than going to a school in London.

Probably before long the course of instruction at the schools will be still further improved. At present many officers go to the schools with so little knowledge of the elementary drill in Parts I. and II. of the 'Field Exercise' that much time has to be spent in

learning that which ought to have been learned before going to the school. At Hythe officers who are imperfectly acquainted with the elementary instruction are sent back to their regiments. If this were done at the schools of instruction, the whole time could be spent on more advanced work, which is at present impossible.

The appointment of well-qualified Garrison Instructors has been a great boon, and no officer of the Army now, who wishes to learn, will lack opportunity. I think that if Instructors for the Reserve Forces were appointed, instead of Colonels on the Staff, as is proposed—who will have very little chance of doing us any good, unless they are chosen specially for their powers of instruction by means of lectures, and of giving practical instruction in outpost duties in the field—it would be far better. An occasional brigade-day will be practically useless.

Failing, however, any general scheme of instruction, and knowing how difficult it is for most of you, until the autumn at any rate, to avail yourselves of the instruction provided at the schools, I feel bound to endeavour what

I can to assist you in the pursuit of your military studies. In undertaking this duty I feel much mistrust of myself; for I have never been taught anything of this kind myself: I have only a very slight knowledge of the higher branches of the profession; what I know I have picked up in a haphazard manner. But, while feeling this mistrust of myself, I take refuge in the words of a well-known and beautiful writer, used on an occasion somewhat similar to this on which we are met, but for which he was pre-eminently competent: 'I rest in the conviction that the tree which we set in earth to-day will not fail in its height because the planting of it is under poor auspices.'

At the commencement of our studies I was asked by one of our most energetic officers whether I thought it necessary that the officers should learn all the details of squad drill with exactness—whether, for instance, they should be required to learn the precise wording of the instructions for the manual and firing exercises, as they are never called upon to instruct a recruit, which is done by the sergeants; and whether it would not be generally sufficient if

they learned to drill a company and to command it on parade! My answer is that it does not follow, because we have been working upon an erroneous system, under which too much has been taken from officers and placed on non-commissioned officers, both in the Army, Militia, and Volunteers, that we should much longer work in this manner; and even now, although an officer is seldom called upon actually to give detailed instruction to a recruit, yet he is at all times responsible that the sergeants instruct the recruits correctly, and he should therefore be ready to correct, without doubt or hesitation, any error that he may notice in the explanations given by a sergeant when drilling recruits.

This seems to me to be specially necessary in a Volunteer corps, in which, from the very nature of things, we can hardly expect, though we certainly ought to strive after, the strict discipline, the ready, unhesitating, and unquestioning obedience, that may be looked for in soldiers. Discipline is a plant of slow growth. Discipline can never be perfect until it becomes a habit—until it becomes so habitual to obey that it is more natural and

therefore easier to obey than to question. 'Habit is second nature,' and often stronger than nature itself. Now this kind of discipline can only come by being constantly, continuously, and consecutively exercised. We cannot by our Volunteer training alone produce it, so long as we have nothing continuous or consecutive in that training.

In such a regiment as ours, if the officer is to obtain the confidence of his men, they must know, must feel, that he is worthy to be confided in—that his knowledge of his duty is such that they can rely upon him. 'When he' (the North German soldier), says the author of 'The Tactical Retrospect,' 'finds himself suddenly encompassed by the dangers of war, he desires to have some one at hand to give him confidence that all is going on well. His eye naturally turns to his officer. If he sees in the calm look of his commander that he must be obeyed—if he sees him go forward undismayed, he generally asks for nothing more.' And it has been well said: 'What makes a nation successful in war is self-devotion and a capacity for discipline, quite as much as numbers, wealth, or military

science.' And again our own, perhaps, best living military writer says: 'The efficiency of an army is not to be estimated by its numerical strength, so much as by union, discipline, and reliance on its leaders.' This is just as applicable to a regiment or a company as to an army; for it is impossible that soldiers should have reliance on or confidence in a leader, unless they believe that he is efficient, knows his work, and is worthy to be relied upon.

While this applies to all officers, to no rank does it apply with greater force than to captains of companies; for as my old regimental standing orders say: 'In them is vested the control and management of companies; their supervision is to be constant, vigilant, and personal.' In such a corps as ours, a company is in strength and efficiency very much what its officers make it. The commanding officer, the majors, and adjutant have not nearly the influence over any single company that is possessed by each one of its officers.

Now if any officer is unacquainted with any portion of the duty that devolves on the

sergeants or the privates of the corps, how can he 'pay attention to the manner in which the non-commissioned officers and men do their duty'? how can he 'observe any neglect or slovenly conduct which may come under his notice'? and yet by such supervision, and by timely and judicious interference when occasion calls for it, 'the discipline and efficiency of the regiment is maintained,' and in this 'the honour and credit of all are alike involved.'

I think that I have sufficiently shown the necessity for the most complete mastery by the officers both of the principles and details of drill; yet I cannot refrain from quoting from a letter which recently appeared in the *Times* from a military correspondent, with reference to the custom of the Prussians in respect to that which we are considering:—
'The drills of all kinds are not only superintended by officers: but are entirely carried out by them. There is no such thing as leaving business of this kind to sergeants or sergeants-major. The men learn everything immediately from their officers, and respect them the more on that account. But it may be said, "How do the officers like this perpetual drilling and

teaching?" The answer is that the officers are men of cultivated intellect, who being encouraged to study the higher branches of the art of war, do not consider drill as an end, but merely as a means by which their men must be prepared to execute the work which the officers shall hereafter call upon them to perform.'

In this I am sure we shall be safe if we imitate the Prussians, and to some extent in our regiment we do; for on every drill night may be seen officers and sergeants, not merely drilling, but giving the detailed instruction in drill to our men, and on Saturday last we had in Westminster Hall three captains, two lieutenants, an ensign, and two sergeants teaching and giving detailed instruction to squads of men in 'the firing exercise' for the breechloader.

But while we are quite safe in following this excellent example, which more than anything else attaches the men to their officers, let us resolutely resist those amongst us who would have our military system made a servile copy of that which has effected so much in the recently closed memorable cam-

paign. We should remember that it has happened once before that every national military system in Europe was more or less successfully modelled on that of Frederick the Great, and that after the complete overthrow of Prussia by Napoleon, 'the worship of Prussian models which had prevailed through the armies of Europe was changed into a contempt as ill-founded as the opposite extreme.' We are now in danger of rushing into that 'opposite extreme.' Let us, however, resist the impulse. The Prussian system undoubtedly suits them. We have yet to learn that it would be universally successful. Let us borrow freely, and blend that which is good therein with that which is good in our own system.

Let us refuse to listen to those who tell us that there is nothing good in our military system, and that we must sweep it entirely away and begin *de novo*. There is much that can be and ought to be improved. Great improvements have been made in the last few years, are being made, and will doubtless continue to be made; but, says the wise author of 'The Tactical Retrospect,' 'To change that which has become customary and deeply rooted in an army is always

a critical matter ; but to make wholesale alterations is ruinous. When all old rules are suddenly altered, no one knows where to turn, and for fear of making a false move everything remains at a standstill.'

Commencing, then, at the beginning of our drill-book, I would draw your attention to the fact that very much depends on your word of command, and that many of you do not take nearly sufficient care about your command. In every case the word of command should be given in a loud, clear, distinct tone. It matters not how thoroughly you know your drill, you cannot drill men well, cannot make the most of them, cannot take full advantage of their powers, unless you take great pains with your word of command.

The Position of the Soldier seems to be the foundation of all good drill, and it is unfortunate that as soon as the recruit has been taught what his position is, he virtually ceases to practise what he has learned, and instead of marching by taking up points, and habituating himself to advance correctly on a given point in front, he marches 'by the touch.'*

* 'The line, which alone means the full effect of a fire, has the disadvantage that its close touch prevents the men from

It will be a step in advance when we are allowed to drill in a more open order than at present, when each man will be responsible for himself, and will then habitually practise that which he is taught when a recruit.

The Salute.—Perhaps there is nothing laid down in the Field Exercise Book and in the Regulations which is so systematically neglected by Volunteers as saluting, and often, when not actually neglected, it is performed in a slovenly and negligent manner. Many Volunteers when in uniform do not even salute their own officers although in uniform; many to whom this does not apply neglect to salute officers of other regiments and other branches of the service. Now this betokens a complete misunderstanding as to the relative position of those who serve and those under whom they serve; it brings discredit on the corps to which those men belong; leads soldiers to judge, and judge rightly, that they are badly trained and imperfectly disciplined.

We must look to the non-commissioned

using their weapon freely. . . . All these disadvantages appear to vanish when the line is so formed that instead of a close touch, an interval of two paces is left between each file.'—*The Prussian Infantry.*

officers to set a good example in this matter: they should never neglect this plain duty; they should frequently remind the men that this simple act of courtesy is also a plain act of duty.

A soldier, if known to pass a Volunteer officer without saluting him, would be punished; yet I fear that an officer of the Regular Army is more often passed by Volunteers without being saluted than not.* I am, however, bound to say that in London the sentries of the Guards frequently omit to salute Volunteer officers, although in uniform and with their swords on. As a matter of duty, as a matter of good feeling and of discipline, I ask every non-commissioned officer to give earnest attention to this; and every officer never to allow a Volunteer in uniform to pass him, when also in uniform, unacknowledged, without courteous but firm reprimand. Do not think that I lay too much stress on this simple matter, for I regard it as the foundation of discipline, almost the only visible token when off parade

* An officer of the regular army has told me that since he has been at the camp at Wimbledon, that is for the last four days, although always in uniform, he has only been saluted by one Volunteer.

that any difference exists between those who command and those who ought to obey and who in joining a corps have undertaken to obey.

The habit of discipline can only be formed during peace: the foundation of discipline must be laid in respect to officers; there cannot be respect where the outward token of respect is withheld, or even where it is regarded as in any way a matter of choice whether it should be paid or not. I have no intention of raising a laugh in alluding to a still more simple matter than saluting, and one on which, of course the regulations are silent. I have no wish to excite a smile when I say, in sober seriousness, that I think that the practice of officers and sergeants shaking hands on meeting with their friends, who are sergeants or privates, and when all are in uniform, or even in plain clothes, with rifles, and are just mustering for parade, is very detrimental to discipline. It seems to me that it must be well-nigh impossible that a man who has just shaken hands with another, the mere fact of shaking hands betokening something of equality—it seems to me impos-

sible that he can immediately feel 'as one who serveth' under the man with whom he has just shaken hands. I do not wish to interfere in any way with good-fellowship, with social relations; the moment parade is over—the moment the soldier is again merged in the civilian—the moment that the ordinary social positions of friendship, of equality, if such it be, of brotherhood it may be, as no less than five of our officers have brothers in the ranks—the moment parade is over, let that sign which commonly signifies friendship, welcome, and equality pass; let officer and sergeant, officer and private, if they wish, shake hands. But when mustering for parade, as well as when on parade, from the moment that the civilian and social relation is merged in the military relation, the ordinary relation usually existing between them should be lost sight of, and nothing should be done which can in any way have a tendency to make the Volunteer private or sergeant feel on an equality with the Volunteer officer; everything should be done to make it easy and natural for the private to obey. In this respect, from the constitution and nature of the Volunteer service, we are altogether unlike

the Army. In the Army a commission confers social position on a man, even if he did not possess it before. In the Army the rank and file should be made to realise that the interests of officers and men are identical. 'Let us sink, as far as possible,' says Sir Garnet Wolseley, 'the titles of officers, sergeants, and privates, merging them in the one great professional cognomen of Soldier.'

Apodos of this let me give you an instance that occurred, bearing on my argument, to some connections of my own. It happened that three brothers were serving on the same ship, the one in command of the ship, the other in command of the marines serving on board, and the youngest as a midshipman or cadet. The marine one day said to his young brother, 'C——, I'll give you a sovereign if you will go up to P —— on the quarter-deck and call him by his christian name.' 'Done,' said the youngster; but when he did it, the captain mastheaded him. A few days after, the marine wished to repeat the joke; but the middy said, 'I will give you 5*l*. if you dare do it, ——.' Here we have three brothers, all three officers, but the fraternal relation for the time

is entirely swallowed up by the professional relation.

There is no one that I respect more than our worthy sergeant-major, who was said by our late honorary colonel, Lord Clyde, to be one of the most soldierlike soldiers that he knew; but I am sure he would think I was bereft of my senses if, when assembling on parade, I were to shake hands with him. Discipline is made up of little things—much of it of such small things as these. I pray God we may never be called upon to fight unless discipline has become habitual to every one of us.

Listen to the words of a Frenchman written immediately after Sedan: ‘One great cause of the difference between the armies’ (German and French) ‘is the difference of respect shown by the men to the officers. The French soldier thinks himself as good as his officer, if not better, and he betrays this opinion in his bearing. And it is on a campaign, where the strictest discipline is of the utmost importance, that it has the greatest tendency to become relaxed.’ In common honesty we cannot deny that this applies to many a Volunteer corps.

The newspapers have done much to foster this feeling, and, by exaggerating the inefficiency of the officers, have induced many of the men to fall into this error, which, with many other mistakes of a similar character, has greatly helped to bring about the utter ruin of the French army. Thorough knowledge of your work, zeal in the performance of your duties, and a courteous strictness in your dealings with your men, will alone prevent the deadly disease alluded to in the above extract from effecting a hold in our midst.

The skirmishing drill is now taught to every recruit as part of the elementary instruction necessary to make him into a soldier. Further improvement has been made, in that each man while skirmishing is allowed greater scope for the exercise of his individual intelligence. This is greatly advantageous to Volunteers, who, being for the most part fully occupied in civil life, have their wits sharpened and their faculties at work; but yet I am convinced that, as it would be impossible to make every man, however carefully trained, into a first-rate sportsman, so will it prove to be impossible to make every soldier, militiaman, or Volunteer, a *first-*

rate light infantry man. The mere fact that there are many third-class shots in every branch of the service proves this. Be it remembered that third-class men are men who have failed when shooting at a target at distances not exceeding 300 yards. How then can they be useful as skirmishers, who for the most part fire at distances above 300 yards? Surely this proves that, even if not now, at any rate when we have a rifle as effective at 1,000 yards as the Snider at 500 yards, some system must be arrived at under which those who fail at 200 yards should not be required to fire at 800 yards. Perhaps the best plan will be to keep third-class shots in the rear rank, and never let them skirmish; or by placing them in central companies, and never letting them skirmish: placing them in the rear rank would be the best plan.

Sir Garnet Wolseley says: 'Specially instructed men are required for this work. It is a noble trade, that of the light infantry soldier.' The principle, now happily introduced, of men firing in the position which suits them best, will be carried out with us, as a general rule, by the men lying down; though there will be some circumstances under which

it will be better to fire kneeling, or it may even be standing. The rule will be to fire lying down. If any man chooses a different position, he should be at all times ready to give his officer, or non-commissioned officer, a sound reason for his choice, and the officer should take care to ask it.

You cannot too frequently impress upon the men the necessity of always aiming at some definite object; of taking a calm, deliberate aim, as if the object aimed at were also aiming, and about to fire at them; of not firing too quickly; of taking, as nearly as possible, the same time to fire each shot as they find from experience it takes to fire successfully at the target; to husband the ammunition with great care at all times, especially when they have but few rounds left in the pouch; and to fire low.

The chance, however, of firing high when in confusion is diminished by the use of the breechloader. Captain Hozier says: 'A man with an arm on the nipple of which he has to put a cap, naturally raises the muzzle in the air, and in the hurry and excitement of action forgets to lower it, and sends his bullet over the enemy's head; while a soldier with a breech-

loader keeps the muzzle down, and if in haste he fires it off without raising it to the shoulder, yet his shot takes effect; and a proof of this was that' (at the battle of Poddol, between the Prussians and Austrians, in 1866) 'very many of the Austrians were wounded in the legs.'

We now skirmish in single rank. Be sure that you do not let skirmishers crowd. Not only do men crowded together attract fire, but men crowding together lose their individuality, do not act for themselves, but depend entirely on the orders for which they wait, and the moment for action passes. 'The situation or state of affairs before them can only be properly judged of by the skirmishers themselves.' Do not let skirmishers, except when halted, remain very long under cover; 'they should advance quickly,' 'screening the attacking force from view, and steadying the men composing it, who, if they see a heavy fire, from a cloud of skirmishers, kept up in their front, are not likely to feel any desire to open fire themselves.'

It is, then, of the first importance that skirmishers, when advancing, should advance quickly, maintaining a well-directed, well-aimed, effective fire, not only destructive to

the enemy, but serving as a screen for the attacking force whose advance they are covering. But, remembering how very difficult it is to fire effectively immediately after running, or even moving at a quick pace, never hesitate, even while advancing, to lie down, or kneel, or take any position which will enable you to fire with greater effect than if you fired standing. Most shots, standing, at distances over 300 yards, must be wasted, unless fired at large bodies of men. In retiring, however, they should 'dispute every rise or hillock, every bank or ditch, and all broken ground that affords them cover.'

It is well that we should realise that skirmishing is very difficult, and that it requires far more practice than we can easily obtain to make men even skirmish decently. With this in mind, we last autumn commenced skirmishing drill every Saturday on Wimbledon Common, and I hope that we shall be able to have skirmishing on every Saturday evening throughout the spring and summer, on which we have no regular parade. We gain this advantage by this plan, that

having for the most part only those men who have come down to shoot, we have not at drill more men than we can conveniently look after and teach. Moreover, to quote again from 'The Prussian Infantry,' 'the company is the school for the making and instructing in details, and the battalion solely for tactical education,' hence the necessity of having frequent drills of small bodies. Remember that the private in the ranks has never one single thing to do, whether in battalion or brigade drill, that he has not first been taught when in squad or company. On this account, Lord Elcho has more than once tried to get the distinction and proportion of company and battalion drills altered which a Volunteer is required to attend. It often now happens that a man attends his six battalion drills in the spring, and his three company drills in the autumn, thus losing all chance of instruction. It would be far better for the service if the number of company drills were increased, and if no battalion drill took place until the company drills for the year were finished.

But to return to skirmishing, every member

of the London Scottish who was present at the review at Wimbledon in 1869 has seen what good skirmishing is; for were we not, as a regiment, completely annihilated by the 2nd Battalion of the Rifle Brigade? The papers on the following Monday said that we had made a gallant fight; but we all knew better—mainly from the fault of the general officer in command of our division, who did not allow us to skirmish until it was too late, until in fact the Rifle Brigade were within fifty yards of us: we should have been sacrificed, and barely one left to tell the tale. Had there been an umpire on that day, our regiment would have been ignominiously marched off the ground as prisoners ere the fight had been ten minutes old.

Do you not remember the quiet, stealthy manner in which those splendid riflemen crept on to us! Coming like great green, noiseless caterpillars, crawling to the very edge of the furze bushes, and then, with perfect calmness and steadiness, opening out on us the most tremendous fire, coolly lying on their stomachs almost hidden by the slope of the ground, their Sniders, opposed only by our

muzzle-loaders, which not many would have had a second chance of firing, would ere long, had we been really engaged, have written in letters of blood the story of the destruction of the London Scottish near the well-known mill of Wimbledon.

There we had a specimen of good and effective skirmishing; and if you will think often of that scene, with the riflemen swarming the ground as thick as ants, almost hidden by an impenetrable cloud of smoke through which we could but hazily see the heads of the individuals at whose stern mercy we then were, yet through which our masses—for our whole brigade was close behind us—could be plainly seen and surely hit by them, you will have before you a standard of skirmishing at which to aim; and with that to guide you, you can learn more than from any words of mine.

I would, however, remind you of a few points which should never be lost sight of when skirmishing. While all movements of skirmishers should be made with rapidity, coolness is indispensable—rapid always, hurried never. Skirmishing fire, to be effective, must be deliberate. Nerve is essential to useful light infantry troops.

The best deerstalker in the world would probably be the best skirmisher ; whoever is the former must be the latter. The qualities necessary to make the one are essential to the other. As the British Yeomanry, properly trained, would make the finest outpost cavalry in the world, each regiment being for the most part trained in its own locality ; so the best light troops in the world would be the best stalkers, whether keepers, gentlemen, noblemen, or gillies, and the next best would be the men trained most like them.

Now we were told by a general officer of distinction a few months ago : ‘It is in the power of every commanding officer to make his regiment efficient as light troops ;’ but that ‘it is not in the power of every commanding officer to make his men fit to move in brigade or line. Considerable practice in bodies, and more especially considerable practice in connection with the *officers*, is necessary in order to arrive at this result.’ Now we must take care not to misunderstand this. It was written of our present organisation, with our uncertain musters, with our few opportunities of meeting in large bodies—written in

a kindly manner, and with the intention of helping us and giving us good advice; yet, for all this, the ruling idea must surely be wrong; for, to state it in another way, it says it is possible to train men in that which is most difficult, requiring great physical power, great skill, quickness, and intelligence; while it is not possible to train the same men in that which is of the same kind, but requires less skill, quickness, and intelligence.

Captain Hozier in his 'Seven Weeks' War' says: 'While the Prussians have lately adopted a system of manœuvres for field service which unites immense elasticity with great rapidity of movement, they have not failed to observe that the foundation of all tactical pliability lies in previous solidity and precision; the troops who cannot move well on parade rarely can be of much use on service; and that before infantry soldiers can dash about as skirmishers they must be able to move accurately in more solid formation.' This opinion was founded on the practical experience of the Prussian Staff. And, as bearing on this point, which is important as influencing the education and system of training which we should follow, I cannot

forbear quoting from an article which recently appeared in *Fraser's Magazine*. 'Many of those who favour the public with their views have expressed the opinion that the skirmish line, and not the line of battle, is the proper place for Volunteers in the field; forgetful of the fact that skirmishers require far more elaborate and constant training, as well as a higher degree of intelligence and self-reliance, than men in close order, who are accustomed to advance, retire, and fire by direct word of command alone. The skirmisher must often act on his own judgment; he must have an educated eye to seize on any position of vantage, whence, sheltered himself, he may annoy his enemy.' Doubtless with time and training, the Volunteers—a force resembling the Prussian army,* so far as position, intelligence, physique, and anxiety to learn are concerned, infinitely

* The class of men composing the Prussian army may be learned from an extract from a letter written by Mr. A. Forbes in the *Daily News* of this day. 'I met a pleasant group this forenoon—four of them, and there were three capable legs between them. Private soldiers, all the four of them. One was the son of a master tailor; second, tender of a steam-engine in a factory; third, apprentice to an emigration agent; the fourth had had a shop of his own, which his absence at the war had ruined.'

more than any other force in this country—doubtless with care, opportunity, and instruction, the Volunteers may be made fit, may be moulded into splendid light troops. But in common honesty I must confess, and you all, I think, agree with me, that while we none of us regard our regiment as the worst in our branch of the service, we should be very sorry to have to skirmish against a battalion of the Rifle Brigade; and however unfit we may be, we should feel safer and more comfortable if, instead of being employed as light troops, we were standing shoulder to shoulder, trusting to our weight and strength to carry us through the charge we should have to make against the half-grown boys with which our line regiments are now for the most part recruited.

There is danger too in partially trained troops being used as skirmishers. 'Skirmishes were frequent,' says Colonel Fletcher in his 'History of the American War,' 'along the line of the Potomac, usually resulting in little loss to either party. Like all young and undisciplined troops, the men were fond of using their rifles' (we know this from our blank-firing parades), 'but careful not to expose themselves to the enemy, and much

powder was wasted at long ranges, firing at picquets and sentries, and but little harm done.'

On the other hand, I would quote from the admirable account of the Waterloo campaign, written by the late General Sir Shaw Kennedy, to show that troops no better trained, no more disciplined than we are, when judiciously mingled with steady, tried, and experienced soldiers, can not only hold their own in line of battle, but may succeed, by sheer courage and indomitable steadfastness, such as is to be expected of brave men when near to each other and supporting one another, each under the eye of his comrade, and every man under the moral pressure of the whole body, however slightly trained, in beating well-trained and disciplined soldiers. 'In Ney's first great cavalry attack, our third division delivered their fire when the French cavalry were about thirty yards distant. In this attack there were forty splendid squadrons; in the next, seventy-seven squadrons. In no case was a single British square broken, though many were composed of young and totally inexperienced troops.'

Let us comfort ourselves with this reflection, that, however short we are of what we might be made, however much our value is diminished from lack of organisation, of training, of soldierlike discipline, we should prove of some good in the day of our country's trial, if 'young and totally inexperienced troops' were so handled as to render them capable of taking their fair share in destroying the finest cavalry in the world, led by Ney, under the eye of Napoleon. I see no reason why we should be 'unfit to move in brigade or line' if those who command us can handle us as well as the troops, 'many of them young and totally inexperienced,' were tactically handled when the battle was in progress at Waterloo. What we have to do is to keep on steadily at our drill and shooting, endeavouring to make them as interesting and instructive as we can, to answer all criticisms by sticking to our work, leaving nothing undone that ought to be done, thanking those who help us, and learning from them what we can, disregarding those who do not help us, and trusting that all legitimate pressure will be brought to bear upon those in authority to make us something better than

—through no fault of our own—our enemies say, and we ourselves sometimes have to confess, we are—‘a rabble of battalions.’ It is not your fault that after eleven years’ service, eleven years’ waiting to be organised, to be trained, taught, and disciplined, we should read in the *Versailles Moniteur*: ‘The Volunteers are only a collection of military amateurs, on whom it would be impossible to impose the duties and strict discipline of the citizen soldiers of Prussia.’ If only common sense sits at the helm, the noble ship of whose crew we form part may be taken through seas rough or smooth; and if in the passage some of our own special part of the crew are left behind, owing to the dislike ‘to endure hardness,’ those who remain—by far the greater proportion—will be willing and, I confidently believe, able to do good service in the day of our country’s need.

II.

A Lecture delivered to the Officers and Non-commissioned Officers of the London Scottish R. V., March 29, 1871.

YOU will remember that at the close of my last lecture I invited you to discuss that which I had then said; and it will also be within your recollection that the only officer who responded to my invitation, while enforcing the necessity for a careful use of the ammunition, expressed his opinion that the officers and non-commissioned officers would be fully alive to the necessity for exercising control over the men in respect to the ammunition, and would be able to prevent their wasting it.

This opinion is confirmed by the experience of the Prussians, as is shown by the following quotation from an interesting book, called 'From Sedan to Saarbrück,' by an English artillery officer, written during the war. 'We were careful to inquire whether it was

found difficult to prevent the men from blazing away too rapidly, owing to the expeditious loading of breechloaders; and whether it sometimes happened that their troops, while under fire, ran short of ammunition. The invariable answer . . . was, "Never. It has occasionally occurred to the French, but never to ourselves." Now, while this extract shows that it is possible to husband the ammunition so that troops may never be without a supply at the supreme moment, it also shows that it requires careful training before soldiers learn this all-important lesson; for although the Prussians, who from long use have become familiar with the needlegun, have attained to this standard, yet the French, who have but recently had a breechloader placed in their hands, were occasionally 'without ammunition.' 'According to the Prussian rules, not a man is allowed to fire a shot except by special word of command, the links transmitting the order being the captain, subalterns, and sergeants commanding sections. In cases of emergency the captain may give the word of command "quick fire," and then each man fires deliberately and independently.' To this rule there

are, of necessity, many exceptions, and especially when skirmishing.

You will, I think, readily believe that I was gratified to find that in my last lecture I carried you with me. My object was then, and is now, only to say that which is founded on common sense, or supported by evidence sufficient to enable you to accept it as sound; and to draw your attention to some points which have been far too much lost sight of, and which should in my opinion be brought out of the obscurity in which they have been hidden, and be placed in the broad light of day.

You will remember that I laid great stress on the necessity of Volunteers invariably saluting their own, and all other officers, in uniform, without which outward mark of respect, I said, that there could be but little real discipline. On the following evening one of our captains wrote to me drawing my attention to some remarks in that day's *Times*, which, as he said, 'fully confirmed' what I had said on the previous evening. I had already noticed the passage to which he referred, written by a military correspondent, and I now quote it as bearing strong testi-

mony to the views I had urged on your consideration. 'I was at a restaurant yesterday, and saw what could have happened in no other army in the world. There were three officers—two field-officers and one a captain—seated at a table. In rolled six or seven loutish-looking fellows—common soldiers—and sat down close to the officers without saluting or taking the smallest notice of them. One of them began to talk over his beer of his battles, in order, apparently, to annoy the officers at the table, by speaking in the most offensive way of his — colonel. The officers rose, and went away, saluting the "dame de comptoir" by raising their képis, and passed close by the soldiers, who never rose, or saluted, or took the least notice of them.' No wonder that the writer concludes with these words: 'To lead an army of such men to victory would be impossible for Napoleon and all his marshals.'

Now, of course, in the case of Volunteers we may hope that the offensive language would not, at any rate, have been made use of; but in every other respect surely the scene may be repeated over and over again during

the coming Easter week at Brighton. It is beyond question difficult to say how much, or in what manner, on an occasion such as the Brighton Review, privates are to recognise the distinction between their officers and themselves, when they are all messing together and living on a social equality; nevertheless, I do say this, that on first meeting in the morning, or on parting at night, or at some time and in some manner, a well-trained Volunteer private will recognise his friend and social equal as his officer and military superior. The position is not unlike that which officers in the Army hold towards their commanding officer—while meeting, of course, socially equal, the military distinction is never lost sight of in a good regiment.

An instance occurred within my own observation a few days ago, showing how common the omission of the salute is, and how seldom a Volunteer is blamed for this neglect of duty. I was on a Board to examine some officers. After the examination was over, the other adjutant, who together with the assistant-adjutant-general of the district, had served on the Board, was with me at the station, talking to three

of the officers who had just passed their examination, when a private of the corps passed, who had been on parade, forming one of the company which had been manœuvred by those officers who had been examined. The private was in uniform, with his rifle; we were all in uniform; but he passed without any salute. On my suggesting to one of the officers that he should speak to the man, and point out to him that he had done wrong, the officer answered, 'Oh, he is not one of my men; he would not care what I said.'

But I must pass on, and to questions which, at first sight, may seem to you even more trivial than some of those on which I have already laid such great stress.

And first I will speak of uniform. I do not now mean the question of one uniform for all Volunteers, with just such national and other distinctions as exist now in the regular Army, although it is a most important question. If all the Volunteers in Scotland were clothed alike, and we had the same uniform, I have little doubt that we should have 100 more recruits every year; as when young men come up first from Scotland, they cannot, as a

rule, afford to pay for a new uniform; and although this would, doubtless, apply to all corps in London, there being a large annual migration from all parts of the kingdom to the metropolis, and although there would be many obvious and great advantages in such a change, to which I shall again allude, yet I refer now rather to dress, the dress of our own men. Now, two Saturdays ago I found three men in the kilt companies wearing buttoned boots, or boots with elastic sides, and not laced boots, such as ought to be worn. Two of these men gave me a satisfactory reason for not having on laced boots, and there seems to be some little doubt on the subject of laced boots being the regimental boot for the Army, owing to the fact that it is years since the order was published on the subject. This being so, I do not allude to it with a view of finding fault, but as an instance of what I mean, and rather to draw attention to the fact that Volunteers do not, as a rule, pay nearly enough attention to dress. Sir Garnet Wolseley, who recently commanded the expedition to the Red River,* and who has just

* This five months' expedition, on which not a single life

been gazetted to an important post on the staff at the Horse Guards, says: 'Dress is of much more consequence than civil ministers imagine.' . . . 'On service, discipline deteriorates when but little attention is paid to dress, and the men wear almost what they like.' Now, this only refers to service, because, much as the dress of our Army may still be improved, yet the regulations on dress are rigidly adhered to in the Army in ordinary times. If the same laxity were allowed in the Army during peace as is common amongst Volunteers, this distinguished soldier would probably have said, that when dress was neglected, it would be safe to say that discipline was still more neglected.

Listen to a French correspondent of the *Daily News*, in September last: 'I have followed MacMahon from the day when I found him reorganising his army at Chalons to the fatal day at Sedan. When I was at the camp

was lost, proves that England has still officers that can organise and direct, and soldiers that can 'endure hardness.' Overshadowed by the Continental war, Englishmen have not taken much notice of this most highly satisfactory expedition, the difficulties of which far exceeded those that had to be overcome in Abyssinia.

of Chalons, and again at Rheims, I had observed that the number of stragglers was enormous. *I had remarked how untidy and careless the men were allowed to be about their dress and equipments.* I saw how prone the French officers were to avoid the fatigues of long marches and discomfort of bivouacs. . . . I struggled long against this kind of evidence, but the end is only too clear: the bitterness of recrimination between officers and men shows that before the battle a radical element of force was wanting. There was not only a deficiency of cordial relations between the officers and the soldiers, but a fear to enforce the ordinary rules of discipline, lest the soldiers should become altogether unmanageable.'

This quotation leads us on to another fault, far too common amongst us; I mean 'straggling.' Now, the men who straggle about the review-ground at Brighton, or elsewhere, in uniform, while their regiments are engaged in the sham fight; the men who, when their regiment is marching along the streets, fall out, without the permission of their officers, whether because they are thirsty and wish to

drink, or because they see a friend, or even because they are passing near their own homes, or wish to catch a train, not only fail to realise that at such a time they are not entitled to please themselves, or to suit their own convenience, but are the very men who on service would straggle even more than now; for straggling, except when it arises from temporary illness, is merely the result of pleasing oneself rather than obeying others. Very few stragglers are worth much; they are undisciplined men, and you must by this time know that I need not say more to express what I feel towards them. Read the following German account of a 'straggler':—

'So long as the soldier knows that the eye of his officer is upon him, he instinctively feels the inspiration and willingly bows to it. But in the supreme moment, in which danger and death are imminent, suddenly this accustomed link is broken, the eye of his leader is directed towards the enemy in front; the troops hurry towards the fire and among the hissing cannon-shot; the man sees death in his front and a nice road-side ditch by his side; it is the temptation to a theft; he sneaks quickly into it, and

his company is soon far away from him. Those who immediately follow take him for a wounded man. Presently he stands up, he has become a 'straggler;' no one interrogates him; the only one who has a right to do so is in front. Perhaps he now seeks to make himself useful in a safe place, by helping to get the wounded or prisoners to the rear, or he turns simply to marauding. Opportunity makes the thief. This sneaking off in all kinds of ways is by no means a rare occurrence. It is chiefly by these kinds of stragglers that such a serious melting away of many companies in battle is caused. The next morning, when the hot coffee appears, by a most remarkable instinct they all happen to have found their places again.'

Another point to which I wish to draw your attention is marching. It seems to me that we do not nearly march enough. In this it may be said we only follow the example set by our exemplars, the Army. Railways have nearly abolished marching, both at home and in India. It is no answer to say that we merely do as our betters do; if they are wrong, such a plea will not put us

right. I am clearly of opinion that a march-out from time to time of about ten miles, and ten miles home again, would be of great service to us as a regiment, and, seldom as we drill, would occasionally be of greater service than a drill. I do not say this because on such a march I should myself ride. I have footed it with my old regiment for some 230 miles, and enjoyed it thoroughly.

But I think in these cosy railway days we are apt to forget how important a part 'legs and feet' must ever play in war. 'Practise your men in marching,' says a practical soldier. 'The army that can march best is the best army, and the regiment that can march best in an army is the best in that army. As for drill, the worst Militia regiment can do enough for all practical purposes.' This is confirmed by the experience of the recent campaign. 'Our army marches five leagues in fourteen hours; the Prussians do their ten or twelve leagues a day,' is the wail of a Frenchman. The great difficulties of the march which the Prussians made to keep their promise to Wellington, the suc-

cess of which, in spite of the almost insuperable obstacles against which they had to contend, decided the Battle of Waterloo, and gave Europe peace for forty years, would have been impossible to less resolute troops, under a less resolute or less loved leader than their 'Father Blucher,' and would have been equally impossible to unpractised troops, or soldiers not possessing the physical strength and endurance of the Prussians.

Passing from this, I will read a quotation which many of you have, perhaps, recently read: 'Great credit is due to the men of all classes who so gallantly help to keep up the Volunteer movement. We are persuaded that in case of war not only would the present Volunteers be anxious and willing to do their utmost, but their number would be greatly increased. Many of them are excellent shots, sportsmen, men trained and willing to bear fatigue and hardship; in short, simply the finest material in the world wherewith to construct an army; but we are confident in saying that in the event of invasion their uselessness, as at present constituted, would be

astounding.' Now if I say that I am reluctantly compelled to believe that this 'candid friend' is speaking the truth, you may fairly answer that in my last lecture I triumphantly instanced the Battle of Waterloo as showing that 'young and totally inexperienced troops' were able to bear their share in beating off the splendid French cavalry, and that I said it was probable that if called upon to serve we might be found more useful than many critics thought likely. To my mind to believe both views is not contradictory, for I would ask you to look at yourselves from opposite stand-points.

If we are left as we are without more continuous or better training, without discipline, without a larger organisation than our present regimental organisation, then I do honestly believe that the only possible chance we shall have of doing real service actually in the field at the very commencement of the campaign will be if, as at Waterloo, we being 'young and inexperienced troops,' are mixed up with older, better trained, and better disciplined troops. And under such circumstances we should be found useful.

But although we are called Auxiliary Troops, and it is not intended that we should ever enter on a campaign by ourselves, yet it is seldom that those who are attacked can choose the plan or time of the campaign; and as the Reserve Forces so very greatly outnumber the Regular Forces, at least three-fourths of the troops in the field would be Auxiliary and not Regular Troops. Moreover, it seems to me that if England is ever invaded, it will be, like the recent invasion of France, immediately after our army has been defeated elsewhere.

Suppose that, in accordance with our treaty engagements, we sent an army to fight in or on behalf of Belgium; and suppose—monstrous supposition!—that we were beaten; reinforcements are sent out, and the country is stripped of its soldiers and the whole of our Artillery; a second defeat would leave these shores open to attack, unless it could be prevented by our Militia and our Volunteers. I do not say a word about the Navy, simply because, if there is no possibility of any enemy landing in this country,—and we can never be called out unless an enemy does land, or threatens to land,—then surely, except for the social, moral, and

physical good which drilling and shooting bring in their train, we ought to be disbanded. If we can never have to fight, why do we pretend to think we may have to fight; if we may at some time be called upon to fight, is it not more likely that we shall be attacked after the defeat of our army, when the country is denuded of troops, than when we have our full complement of soldiers to place in our front? The Militia are no better than we are; they do not drill better, they cannot shoot nearly as well as the Volunteers, and, like ourselves, are only organised by regiments; they are better trained and officered, having about 300 officers who have served in the Army, while we have only about 150, exclusive of Honorary Colonels and Permanent Staff; and, if the modern theory be correct—and very few affect to deny it—the fact that the Volunteers are taken from a far better class of men than the Militia, are more intelligent, better bred, better grown, better fed, and better educated—then surely we are capable of a higher training than those of whom our Militia is mainly composed. Yet, perhaps, the late war has taught no

lesson more plainly than that 'a mere aggregation of soldiers does not constitute an army.' So far as mere personal courage and actual hand-to-hand fighting are concerned the French have never shown greater bravery.

At Woerth and Gravelotte, and again before Orleans, when the Bavarians were compelled to fall back, the French fought well, never better. Now the numbers of Militia and Volunteers taken together represent about the same number of men as the French Army of the Rhine. We know that this army was, at first, to all outward appearance, as fine an army as France ever sent into the field ; we also now know that it was without proper organisation, badly disciplined and badly commanded, and hampered by political considerations ; but is there a man to be found who would not confess that in every single essential of war the French army was incomparably better than our Reserve Forces ; and that we should have been more rapidly, more surely doubled up by that defective army than it was by the splendid army by which it was defeated ? Of course it may be answered, 'But we do not profess to

be soldiers ; it is not professed that we should be able to fight real soldiers ' : then why spend money upon us at all ? for if ever we fight we shall have to fight soldiers. I do not croak, nor do I say that we shall ever have to fight, but if we are ever to fight, what will be the use of our fighting if we are simply to be butchered, to inflict, perhaps, loss on our enemy and cause delay, but not able to prevent his onward progress ? As I have said before, our Regular Army would not constitute a fourth of the force in the field. It is often said that we should have time to prepare. Although I do not think this is at all certain, yet for my present purpose I do not care to deny it—but even if we had time, how should we spend it ? Clearly in frequent drills, in looking after our ammunition, in obtaining equipment and stores, for we have none ; and doubtless the effect of this would be, that we should know more about guards and picquets, and should drill better than at the beginning of our final breathing-time, and should have some of the necessities required in the field ; but as to marching, shooting, dress, and discipline, our standard in these

things would never be higher than that with which we started; the tendency of a campaign is rather to relax in all such matters. If now, in a few weeks' time, we had to begin a campaign, we should be without great coats, knapsacks, proper accoutrements, or blankets; we should be unable to march rapidly, continuously, or far; in absolute ignorance of cooking;* and thousands of us would be as much at the mercy of a few well-trained and well-disciplined soldiers as were the poor, wretched, butchered—uselessly butchered—mob-lots in France during the winter.

Lord Ranelagh has been most unfairly abused for calling the Volunteer Force 'a sham;' those who take the trouble to try and comprehend what he meant by that word know that it is but a blunt mode of expressing the truth. Simply the finest material in the world, disgracefully neglected; not neglected in the sense of not having the hours

* Since this was written, a detachment of the London Scottish have been for eight days in an instruction camp, waiting on themselves, and getting some slight idea of cooking; a few can pitch and strike a tent; the detachment mounted guard regularly, sentries were posted at night, advanced and rear guards were formed at 6 A.M. every morning.

and days of parade considerably fixed, but that there is no compulsion about the duties of the service after a man has joined. A man may be fairly drilled, or hardly drilled at all, may shoot or not, pretty much as he likes, may be respectful in his demeanour, regular in his attendance, clean in appearance, or may be the opposite of all these, and still remain a Volunteer. A man of genius, or even of power, would long ere this have made such rules, have introduced such systematic organisation, as would have welded the individual and isolated atoms of which the Volunteer Service is composed, into one grand, harmonious, consolidated force of which England might be proud, and which no possible enemy would dare to despise. Not Lord Ranelagh alone, but scores of men as thoughtful and of equal earnestness, are anxious and cast down even, if not in despair.

That I am not saying any new thing is clear, for in 1867 I wrote in *Macmillan's Magazine*: 'The Volunteer Service requires a thorough and complete revision. Those who know most of its administration know most about its deficiencies. The time has surely arrived

for re-organisation, re-construction, re-formation, call it what you will. Were an invader to land, not one quarter of the true value of the Volunteer Force would be realised ; for it is without system, without organisation.' I received a letter this week from an efficient Volunteer officer, who has from the earliest day been most devoted to the Volunteer Service, and who has been in France nearly the whole of the time since Sedan ; it bears so strongly on the question to which most of this lecture has been devoted that I will give you an extract from it : ' I have opened this again on purpose to add convictions, which have been growing upon me month after month, since I have seen what war really is. These are that the Volunteer system is utterly rotten from the very bottom, that with our present organisation, equipment, and discipline we are a snare and a delusion, and a broken reed for the country to fall back on in the time of danger. . . . We have no haversack, no warm coat, no tin for cooking our rations, no water-bottle, and above all, we have a pouch made of such leather that two hours' good heavy rain would soak it through, and from its position

would at the end of a week's bivouacking in the rain be as flat as a pancake, and little better than a mass of pulp. I have hitherto believed in and stuck up for the Volunteers, . . . now I am convinced, in their present state, they are utterly useless.' Such men, and the very many good, valuable, useful men who write and speak in a similar manner, and there are very many such, I always urge not to resign, but to stay on and use every legitimate means of trying to induce the authorities to place us on a proper footing.

But while speaking thus, while acknowledging plainly our very grave and serious deficiencies, I altogether decline to follow those who counsel that we should be disbanded. I am certain that we can be so organised, trained, and taught as to make us fit to stand against soldiers; at first under cover and later in the field. I further deny that the conduct of the French volunteers can be fairly used as an argument against the British Volunteers. Who were the French volunteers fighting for— for Napoleon? Certainly not. For Gambetta? As clearly not. For their country? Well, even if so, it was without heart or hope; so long had

hope of success been deferred that they were sick at heart. 'In war,' said Napoleon, 'the moral is to the physical force as three to one'—the moral force was against them; further they were very badly led. It is for our army officers to determine whether they could lead us better; but we are competent to proclaim without presumption that for our country, our Queen, our homes, our world-envied liberty we will fight. There was nothing voluntary about the French volunteers; if they did not go on they were tried by the peripatetic court-martial that followed them. Here not a man need join. No fair comparison can be drawn between things so entirely different as the French volunteers of 1870 and English and Scottish Volunteers of the same date; the former raised for the most part while the war was in progress, the latter willing and waiting to be taught in the time of peace.

It would not be a difficult thing, I feel sure, so to re-organise the Volunteer Service as to make it something better than a service to which men at home attach but little value, and those abroad just no value at all. Doubtless, in any such reorganisation as is necessary we

should lose a great many men ; possibly our nominal 190,000 might be reduced to 100,000. Let it be so ; for my own part I would willingly see our numbers reduced to 50,000 or even less, provided that the remnant were so trained, equipped, and organised as to 'take from them the sense of reckoning of the opposing numbers.'

But let us leave the consideration of such matters as these and come to drill, with just this one remark. That Volunteers are quite capable of training of a high character is shown by the fact that even in a well-disciplined army there would at all times be found more insubordination than in our service. Nothing is more remarkable than the very small amount of direct disobedience to orders that has occurred among the half million of men who have passed through or remain in the Volunteer Force ; from this notable fact, it is fair to argue that, if in all things a commanding officer had the power to 'order' instead of 'request,' to 'direct' instead of 'urge,' to 'compel' instead of 'hope,' we should find all Volunteers obeying the orders, attending to the

directions, and this without much actual compulsion.

The new drill-book has been welcomed by all who have to use it. The improvements and signs of advance are numerous, and there cannot be much doubt, that, in consequence, we may expect to find better drill, for as the movements are simplified they will be better performed. Some trifling alterations have been made in words of command which are not improvements. 'Subdivisions' could never be mistaken, but 'half-company' may easily be mistaken when on parade for company; the same with 'wing' and 'half-battalion,' although the introduction of the 'half-battalion' column is likely to be very useful, as giving a handy, set, compact mode of movement, and one highly approved by many military men. It was used frequently by General Steinmetz in the Bohemian campaign in 1866, but it is disliked by the author of 'The Tactical Retrospect.' 'Fours,' after chopping about in the various editions of the drill-book from 'Form fours-deep' to 'Squad, fours-deep,' to 'Form fours-deep,' is now only 'Fours-deep,' which directly controverts

the rule that 'a pause of slow time will invariably be made between the cautionary and executive part of a command;' for the word 'Fours,' is executive for the rear rank, hence we seldom find the men acting together. It has been recently suggested that the same word of command should be used in all the arms of the service, so far as is practicable, instead of having different words for Cavalry, Artillery, and Infantry. This might be carried further, and the same words might with advantage be used in skirmishing and in all other drill. We now have advance, retire, incline, in skirmishing, instead of quick march, right-about-turn, half-right or left turn.

It is an undoubted step in advance to place the captain in responsible command of his company, moving about as occasion may require, like any other commander, from place to place, to control all those under his command: and we may well hope that it is a step towards the increase of the numerical strength of companies, and a diminution in the number of companies. Ever since I have been an adjutant of Volunteers I have realised the necessity for an increase in the strength of our

companies. When I was examined before the Volunteer Commission in 1862, I suggested that in all consolidated battalions the minimum of a company should be 100, and the maximum 150.* This would avoid the breaking up of companies on parade: this I should never do if it could be helped. Our 'A' company has seldom been broken up owing to its exceptional strength, and partly, I have no doubt, owes that exceptional strength to this fact; and as companies more and more escape being broken up on parade, they increase in numbers, as shown by the state of the 'B' and 'C' companies. This being so, I think that, so far as strength is concerned, we have a prospect of doing well, for all our companies save one are approaching their maximum number; even our new Highland company, not yet in kilts, has 80 men on its roll.

As we fill up our numbers, it would I think, be well to increase the minimum height at which we take recruits from 5 ft. 6 in., our lowest standard, although we cannot hope

* I should be prepared now even to increase these numbers: unless a peace and a war establishment were fixed, the former at 100 and 150, the latter at 250 as the maximum.

ever to attain through the regiment 5 ft. 8½ in., which is the minimum at present of our 'A' and 'B' companies. Being very small myself, I appreciate physical strength, such as you generally find with men from 5 ft. 8 in. to 5 ft. 10 in. in height. The Prussians lay far greater store by 'the company' than we do. It is their school of instruction, their unit of manœuvre, and the soldier's home during his service. In one place we read: 'The whole line of battle has thus become nothing more than a fight between a number of company leaders and the opposing enemy.' In another, 'Many a fight is won by the company leaders.' In another we read of the field officers attaching themselves during the progress of a fight to the companies. And a Prussian writer, deprecating the idea of an entire regiment being made dependent on the commanding officer in action, says: 'How can anyone be so short-sighted as to consider that the essence of our tactics should consist in driving together into the mass of a column all these splendidly armed and educated soldiers; and in making this precious power, this intelligence of 20 officers, and weight of 1,000 weapons, de-

pendent upon the judgment of one commanding officer, who would be physically unable to govern the powerful machine, much less to apply it to any useful purpose in the rapid changes and complicated circumstances of a battle?’

To those of you to whom this revolutionary remark seems either too strong or going too far ; as weakening the authority of the commander too much, or unduly increasing that of the captains ; I would remind you that it has been well said, ‘ The battles of savages show the ideal notion of a fight in the most perfect manner. Every individual warrior is filled with the idea of the battle.’ Now we may hope that before long we shall follow the example set us in this respect by the German army, but before we can successfully carry this out, we must, like them, ‘ have officers who, by an education embracing all points of a military nature, are enabled to have an unconditional command over subordinates.’

The ground we cover in marching will now be more than heretofore. With 116 paces in a minute we should march in an hour 3 miles 520 yards, which is about what the Prussians

march in heavy marching order and for a short distance. 'We found,' says the Artillery officer I have already quoted, 'that $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles could be performed in a single hour, but not consecutively for a longer period;' but in order to do this they threw part of their kit away, so lightening the burden they had to carry. For remember, with their unwieldy helmets and trousers without gaiters, the Prussians are badly dressed. When the 2nd Regiment marched into Berlin after the Bohemian campaign, there was not one single helmet amongst the men; every man had thrown his helmet away.

Glad indeed are we, at any rate, to welcome 'change ranks,' which is, however, hampered by the order 'to tell off afresh.' It is always confusing for men to have two or more numbers on the same parade; and if it is once understood that left files remain left files, and right files remain right files, in whichever direction they are turned, no confusion can arise. In our experimental drill we never 'told off afresh,' and we never got into confusion by omitting so to do. With so useful, so much more speedy, and so natural a move-

ment as this, it is a wonder that 'countermarching' is retained; as, however, the choice is given us, we shall probably seldom make use of the slower of the two; for it ought not to make any difference to anyone whether the front or rear rank is leading, nor, for the matter of that, whether the right or left company is on the right.

Many of you have seen a little book written by Captain Malton, giving the alterations in the new drill-book, and which, being published before the new drill-book itself, we all eagerly bought. A foot-note in this 'Key to the Field Exercise' says: 'The opinion of the ablest and most practical officers of the service appears to be that to manœuvre habitually with reference to "the front" is at once easier and more rational than to be constantly ringing the changes on unmeaning inversions, a system which (as was well observed in a paper recently read by Colonel Shute, 4th Dragoon Guards, at the Royal United Service Institution) presupposes that an enemy could arise, as at the wave of a wand, simultaneously at every point.' Now, as a matter of fact, it is not 'easier' to 'countermarch' than to

'turn about.' Neither would, I think, any man who had not been trained in the old, rigid, artificial system of drill, a large part of which has been recently abolished, seriously contend that it was harder or less rational to use the word 'right-turn' or the word 'left-turn,' when you wish men to turn to the right or the left, than to use another word which does not convey to an uninstructed person any meaning whatever, and which does not even convey its meaning to a trained soldier without his bearing in mind something that has gone before,—unless he remembers the relation that his present position bears to another position in which he stood at some previous time.

That which comes the easiest to us—that which is most rational—is, of course, that which demands the least thought, that which is most natural. If a man asked one of you the way to a place, you would probably answer, 'Go east for about 100 yards, and then turn south;' but this presupposes a knowledge of the points of the compass on the part of the man you are directing; and is neither so simple, so sure, nor so natural as to say, 'Go straight on for about 100 yards, and then

turn to the right.' As in the one case a knowledge of the points of the compass is necessary, and in the other merely the knowledge of which is your right hand, so in drill, if you unnecessarily use the word 'front' or 'rear,' some previous knowledge and some slight exercise of thought is necessary before you act; while if, whenever it is possible, you give the words 'right' and 'left,' you have no occasion to exercise any thought, but can act immediately, without hesitation or possibility of error, by means of the instinctive knowledge which is part of your being—the knowledge of which is your right, which your left hand.

The less that a man has to remember when called upon to take immediate action at the will of another person, the more instantaneous will that action be. Moreover, the fact that a man is in the habit of moving in any direction at any moment does not in any way preclude him from moving in any particular direction at a particular moment. I do not think the scornful epithet 'unmeaning' can fairly be applied to that which provides that a man shall instantaneously always be prepared to turn

into any direction towards which he is required to turn. Lord Elcho has well said, 'The word "front" can only tend to confuse when given after the men have perhaps been faced to the right-about, taken ground to the right or left, and marched about in different directions.' Moreover, in drill the word 'front' means two distinct directions at the same moment; as when marching in fours to a flank the word 'front-turn' and the word 'front-form' mean turning into positions at right angles to each other; if the one means north the other means east.

On Saturday last, when at drill, when Sir David Baird gave the word 'rear-turn' while retiring in fours from a flank, some men turned in one, and others in the opposite direction. As we have 158 men of less than one year's service in our corps, and as we have been somewhat spoiled by the use of the simple drill, this is not to be wondered at; but no recruit even could have erred if 'right' or 'left' had been given. There are many other remarks I should like to make on drill, but I must postpone them. This, however, I dare predict—that, as time goes on, our drill will be still

more simplified; and that, as it is made 'easier and more rational,' we shall find the scornful note on which I have based these remarks omitted from the 'Key to the Field Exercise' of more enlightened days. Strange, however, as it may seem, enemies can and have arisen 'simultaneously at every point;' for Sir E. Cust says in his 'Annals,' that at the Battle of Alexandria, 'the contest raged so heavily that the 28th and 58th Regiments presented the extraordinary spectacle of troops fighting at the same time to the front, flanks, and rear.' Moreover, as a mark of distinction--signs of honour to commemorate this extraordinary valour--these regiments until recently wore two peaks to their caps, one over the forehead and the other to the back.

III.

A Lecture delivered to the Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, and Privates of the London Scottish R. V., April 27, 1871.

[Lectures Numbers I. and II. were delivered only to Officers and Non-commissioned Officers. On April 20 I read extracts from these Lectures, which made a Third Lecture, and afterwards gave, to all ranks, this and the following Lecture.]

ON Thursday last I read to you some extracts from the two lectures that I delivered during last month to our officers and non-commissioned officers. You will remember that they had reference mainly to questions bearing on the discipline of acorps such as our own, and on the discipline of the Volunteer force generally.

The word discipline, or undisciplined, is very often used with reference to Volunteers, without much thought as to its real meaning. Now what is discipline?

In the dictionary we find 'discipline' defined to be education, development of the faculties by instruction, training to act in accordance with established rules, accustoming to systematic and regular attention, drill, subjection to rule, submissiveness to order and control. When, then, I speak of discipline in its highest and deepest military sense, I speak of no light or common quality. How different this to what is so often meant by discipline, the mere obeying of a direct order when given. In naming discipline I name the aggregate of that which is defined above. I mean the military education of all of you who have voluntarily come forward to learn how to defend the country; I include the development of those faculties which are brought into play by instruction in drill and shooting, by obedience, by acting on the will of another person, having a choice made for you by another, and nothing to do on your part but act on that choice. I include training to act in accordance with established rules so frequently and regularly that you become accustomed to carry them out; such subjection to rule that you obey without hesitation, so submissive to order

and so completely under control as to act on any order as soon as you receive it, even if it seems to you at first sight contrary to the rule under which you generally act. 'The first duty of a soldier (or Volunteer) is to yield implicit obedience to orders. Soldiers must bear in mind that hesitation in complying with an order is tantamount to disobedience. Obedience must be prompt, respectful, and without a murmur.' Now, if you have not attained to such subjection, submission, and regulation of mind, your education and training must be deficient. And if you are conscious of this, as I suppose you are, is it not well that you should set yourselves to find out in what particular you come short of this standard, which, take my word for it, is one main feature in military perfection? To be useful as troops we must put on the whole of the armour which is essential to success.

Now, skill in the use of the rifle, quickness, pliability, exactness of movement, may lead to a temporary success, may win a battle; but unless this proficiency is supported, strengthened, rendered vital by means of discipline, you could not fairly expect to win a campaign.

It may be a moot question as to how much drill is necessary, and even—though I do not think it is—whether Volunteers can have enough of company, battalion, and skirmishing drill to render them fit soldiers; but it is beyond all dispute that you may all submit yourselves to discipline. I have already expressed my belief that the French never fought better than in some parts of the recent war, since which I have heard, on the authority of a German officer who was present at Champigny, that, though badly led, the French fought heroically, although they were young and inexperienced soldiers: one Saxon regiment alone had nearly 2,000 officers and men killed and wounded, and a Wurtemberg regiment had yet more men *hors de combat*, and nearly every officer belonging to it; reminding us of the ‘Buffs’ coming out of Waterloo under the command of an ensign. Bad leading, lack of cohesion and discipline, lost to the French on the morrow that which they had gained as to-day by sheer hard fighting.

Ah, how I wish that a stricter discipline were enforced in our service. Nor do I for a moment think there would be any serious

difficulty in getting Volunteers to submit to it. Those who would resent it would leave the force; but we should be healthier, and have the prospect of better days before us, when those who are really not of us went out from us. But it may be said, 'You will never get anything like this out of Volunteers; in the first place, you cannot instil into their minds the necessity for such strictness, such complete surrender of their own will; and even if you impress them with the desirability of such a thing, you will never be able to effect it.' In fact, I have myself said in my first lecture that perfect discipline can only be attained by 'being constantly, continuously, and consecutively exercised.' This is strictly true; and if your discipline was to be learned only from your Volunteer training, our task would be hopeless.

But we must not lose sight of the fact that there are very few men in our corps, at any rate, who are not under training and being disciplined every day of their lives. I suppose that ninety-five per cent. of the Volunteers are connected in some manner with commercial or banking firms, with business or some pro-

fession. Now in many offices and businesses discipline is maintained with a strictness fully as great as in the Army, and without any break whatever, except during the too short fourteen days' holiday that most clerks are allowed in a year, unless it be on Sunday; on which day, however, a vast majority of our men are rather strengthened and encouraged in their ideas of order, subjection, and self-surrender than otherwise. This discipline is in some instances carried down to such purely private and personal matters as the prohibition of marrying, the regulation of the style of dress, and the necessity of shaving. Now when to this daily civil control is added such military discipline as we bring to bear on you, it must be the fault of those in immediate command, or of those in yet higher authority, if such good soil brings forth weeds; in fact, we have a right to expect, and with judicious cultivation we shall not fail to reap, a rich harvest of good fruit.

That this is no exaggerated statement is shown by the very small amount of insubordination amongst Volunteers. Never before, perhaps, has there been so large an armed

force with so few instances of direct disobedience to lawful authority, or even of indirect disobedience to plain and intelligible orders.* I hope that you have all advanced sufficiently far on the road to discipline to understand that orders must be obeyed, with only just such few exceptions as tend rather to prove than disprove the soundness of the rules, inasmuch as they can yield without fear of snapping.

Whether you shall personally and individually aim at the high standard of discipline which I have thus at too great length and with tedious repetition placed before you, does not seem to me a matter in which you

* N.B.—A return recently published shows that, while in the Regular Army the cases of insubordination resulting in trial have been for the eleven years from 1860 to 1870—1,933, 1,993, 2,081, 1,825, 1,919, 1,726, 1,471, 1,357, 1,829, 2,106, 1,810, the cases of insubordination in the Volunteer Service—numerically much stronger than the Regular Army—have been 69, 143, 107, 107, 174, 204, 199, 214, 400, 347, 455. The increase shown in the return has arisen, I have no doubt, partly from increased strictness on the part of commanding officers, but in no small degree from the changed character of the Volunteer Service, a change which has been going on gradually but surely: the Volunteer Service does not contain as many men of education and social standing as it did ten years ago.

have the right to exercise any choice. Without discipline our service must be well-nigh useless; but you have voluntarily pledged yourselves to be of service in the crisis of our country's fate; in enrolling yourselves in our ranks you have, so far as I understand what your enrolment is, pledged yourselves to efficiency, nor is this a silent pledge, for you have ratified it by an oath!

No man need become a teetotaler, but when a man does become one he loses caste, honour, and consideration should he break his pledge. So with you, what was optional has now become your duty—your duty to yourselves and neighbours, to your officers and Queen and country. ‘Duty! wondrous thought, that worketh neither by fond insinuation, flattery, nor by any threat, but merely by holding up thy naked law in the soul!’

Fully alive as I am to our defects, failings, and imperfections as even auxiliary soldiers; plainly as I endeavour to speak of them, realising as strongly, I think, as any person, the impossibility of our entering upon a campaign in our present state, it is yet to me a matter of heartfelt regret that some of our best

soldiers should try to improve us off the face of the earth. Instead of adopting such a course, I maintain that the wise and the patriotic course is first to try what we can be made into—to set to work to mould us into that which we ought to be. To get rid of the Volunteer Service would be a suicidal act for the nation to perform. When a first-rate soldier like Sir Garnet Wolseley graciously leads us to the top of a hill, on which ‘he does not wish to depreciate the Volunteers of England,’ and then coolly takes us up in his arms and attempts to hurl us to the bottom, there to be left a disorganised mass of smashed humanity—(‘Every shilling of money spent upon the Militia and Volunteers is so much money thrown away. We might nearly as well spend millions upon erecting fortifications of lath and plaster round our coast’)—we can only say that whatever he wishes to do, he does depreciate us as much as it is possible for his influential words to do so.

But we can not only protest against the correctness of his opinion of us, but we can produce on our side the testimony of soldiers no less able, and of even greater experience

than Sir Garnet Wolseley, who we must, however, remember is one of the very best officers in the service. It was no light or thoughtless expression on the part of Lord Clyde, no hastily-formed opinion, but his calm and deliberate judgment, spoken after some considerable study of our capacities, when he said to me, 'If ever I have a command again, and have a Highland Brigade under me, I shall be glad to have your regiment in it.' The mission which Sir G. Wolseley and others have undertaken is hopeless. Right or wrong, the country will not sanction an army of 251,934 soldiers, including the active and reserve troops, as he proposes; neither could the men be raised without compulsion of some sort; but while no one will dispute that 100,000 additional soldiers, drilled and disciplined men of some size, weight, and physical power, would be of greater value, in a fighting point of view, than double the number of partially trained Volunteers; yet, in the present temper of the country, even when John's knees are quaking for fear of the things that may come upon him, no Government could hope to carry the

increase of our Army up to a quarter of a million of men.

If, when the panic fit was on us, and the money bags were opened, such expenditure as would be involved in the maintenance of such an army were sanctioned, we know that great reductions would be made as soon as the mind of the country (whatever that may be) was restored to its usual state of serene equanimity. Why, look, what is happening at this moment? Before the Army Regulation Bill has passed into law—legislation on this subject, be it remembered, having been demanded alike by soldiers and civilians, by the press and the general sentiment of the country—before the bill has passed, or any direct expenditure on this account asked for, but as soon as an increase of the money for army purposes is demanded, not those alone who were opposed to the bill or any legislation, but others, with striking inconsistency, have commenced crying aloud, ‘We do hope the enormous sum this year demanded for the Army will not be asked again. The country will this year pay what is asked, though it will loudly echo the moan that came from below the

gangway last night.' 'This year we will pay' surely shadows forth, in no whispered tone, reductions next year.

Now we are cheap, and, being cheap, are doubtless not the best of our kind that can be got, but being cheap we are likely to be left alone. It is quite useless to battle against the fixed opinion of the country; whether we ought to have an enormous army, or even a large army, is a matter of opinion, but that the country will not find the money necessary for its maintenance seems certain, sure, and beyond dispute. This may be wrong, bigoted, narrow, 'penny-wise and pound-foolish,' or it may be a wise, enlightened, broad policy; but that I state the simple truth seems indisputable.

If Sir Garnet Wolseley, instead of declaring us useless, were empowered to organise, train, discipline, and teach us, I think we should find that, in common with nearly all good soldiers who have become intimately acquainted with us, he would see reason to change his opinion; and we should gain if such an officer were to set to work to make the best of that which nobody denies is bad,

but which affords excellent material on which to work, and which, from its comparative cheapness, is, by the public policy of the country, substituted for that which, in a professional point of view, would be infinitely better.*

Nor have we only Sir G. Wolseley against us. Major-General Sir Lintorn Simmons is an officer of high rank, most varied experience, and professional as well as general culture; and in his excellent pamphlet, 'The Military Forces of Great Britain,' which you should read for yourselves, he is dead against us: 'dependence could not be placed on us.' In another passage we are 'disposed of at once;' 'the idea of our protecting or delivering the country' is pronounced 'ridiculous.' Nor is this all, for Colonel Chesney, R.E., who I have ventured to call in my first lecture our best living military writer, says, 'Those who care to study the details of the campaign in which Prince Frederick Charles overthrew

* There are numbers of officers who could soon organise the Volunteer Service if they were given power sufficient, and were altogether unhampered. I hope I am not doing wrong in saying that I think that the Inspector-General of Reserve Forces, if left to himself, would soon make the Service what it should be.

Chanzy in Brittany may read beforehand what would happen should a large army of the most well-intentioned and high-spirited Volunteers undertake to check a considerable invading force.'

I would merely remark in passing that, from the accounts that have come to my notice, I have rather judged that the French volunteers under Chanzy were neither 'well-intentioned' nor 'high-spirited,' that their evident intention was to throw away their arms, and cover their uniform with a blouse, and pass for unarmed peasants, whenever the chance presented itself; that their spirits were of the lowest, and only became rather more dismal as they croaked out a dispiriting song about their going to be butchered.

With such an array of force against us, we may well consider with all sobriety whether we ought quietly to withdraw from service. With soldiers so able, so honest, and so candid pronouncing beforehand a doom of uselessness on your efforts, which are being made at no small cost of time, labour, and expense, what ought we to do? What is the best course for us to adopt, not in our own interests, but in

the interest of our country? If we are injurious, ridiculous; if no efforts on our part can lead to anything but a dream of confidence, which must inevitably be dispelled by a rude and awful shock whenever, wherever, or however we may be called upon to put to the test that which we are trying to learn; if our existence prevents better plans being carried out, a better force being raised; if on our disappearance the country would at once fill our places with a body of men of greater use, whose existence would render the nation so safe that there never could arise the possibility of the country, in her direst necessity, requiring the services of any other force than that which would be substituted in our stead; if for ever could be set aside not only a panic fever, but also the possibility of a *levée en masse*, then I for one at any rate should say, in spite of the social, physical, and sanitary advantages to the force itself and to the country at large, if all this could be shown to be true, then, the *raison d'être* of the Volunteer force no longer existing, the authorities would act wisely in disbanding us.

But it is, I believe, impossible that the

country will assent to substitute for our present system another system, perfect and complete, in which we should all have confidence, but which ought to be organised before we are got rid of. Neither do I believe that these officers—honourable, able, and personally disinterested as they are—can give an impartial and unbiassed opinion on the value of our Volunteer Force. It has been remarked before, that the solution of the difficult problem of reduction in our military expenditure is in some way mixed up with the Volunteer system.

Civil Engineers are pretty well agreed that they can do very much of the work done by the Royal Engineers better and cheaper than it is now done; but, even if the public admit the fact, they do not act upon the advice.* While the Army has been most friendly and helpful to us, it cannot be denied that many officers are

* I cannot help expressing my opinion that those so-called reformers who would sweep away our entire military system must be ignorant of the indisputable fact that there is no body of officers in any service in the world that can compare for talent and efficiency with our Engineers; and that the Artillery are not far behind their sister scientific corps.

hostile to us. Ever since standing armies have existed there has been a slight contempt on the part of soldiers for all civilian troops, which has been more or less disguised according to circumstances. Some object to our officers having rank—relative rank when serving together; others think that the fact of our existence enables reductions to be made in the Army; so that, take it altogether, I think—specially with what looks like historical proof, as presented in the recent campaign, on their side; also, let us honestly confess, with the serious imperfections which we know surround us—we should not be astonished that many able men are opposed to us. It does not seem to me to be of much use to quote Lord Clyde, Sir Hope Grant, General McMurdo, or Colonel Shakespear as not agreeing with our candid friends, for it is proverbial that doctors disagree; although the latter, who has only just joined our service, has expressed his opinion in the strongest language, not in a whisper, but in the columns of the *Observer*, that his artillery corps would be most useful, and even that they did at Brighton what would have tried the metal of our splendid Royal Artillery.

But, on the other hand, it does seem well that we should try and forecast what would happen if these officers had their wish and no more money was spent on the Volunteer Service, and if we failed in maintaining ourselves, as the Hon. Artillery Company maintain themselves, without any Government assistance.

By this year's estimates it appears that we shall cost 637,000*l.* This includes stores and Permanent Staff. As far as I can make out, the 20,000 men recently added to the Army will cost this year, with their proper proportion of officers, &c., 685,000*l.* If I am correct in this, or even not far wrong, we find that the cost of maintaining, clothing, equipping, feeding, teaching, doctoring, punishing, and preaching to the wretched, half-grown, sickly lads who have been recently enlisting from a very low stratum of society, and whom we are going to turn back again into the streets as drilled, trained, taught men, without provision or occupation, probably unable to obtain employment of a permanent nature, owing to their liability to be called upon to serve, hence probably a source of danger should troublous

times come upon us—we find that the cost of these men will exceed the cost of the maintenance of the entire Volunteer force, so far as the cost is borne by the public. A description of these fine soldiers appears in the *Times* of Monday last, signed by a Deputy-Inspector-General of the Army: ‘Hundreds of these recruits have passed through my hands. The very sergeants who present them are ashamed of them; they are with difficulty got through their drill; they are too weak for it and their musket and accoutrements. They drink to keep up their strength; they get palpitation of the heart; they are shipped off to the Mediterranean or India, and either die like flies or get invalided.’ . . . ‘We are about to get a sham army.’ *

Now, let alone that such garrisons as Portsmouth, Plymouth, Chatham, and Dover require a great number of men to defend them; let alone, however useless mere numbers may be, it is impossible altogether to disregard them when the forts that must be manned are

* Since this was written, Lord Sandhurst’s courageous speech in the House of Lords has drawn great attention to the unsatisfactory character of our recruits.

built; will any soldier seriously contend that these 20,000 youths, averaging perhaps 5 ft. 4 in. in height, without strength sufficient to go through their drill, let alone a hard campaign, many of whom will spend a considerable portion of their three years' service in confinement—that these men, at whom the people in the streets actually jeer, as on Monday last, when some of them, drilled men too as they evidently were, were passing over Waterloo Bridge—‘Fine body of men them, Bill!’—will any person seriously contend that these 20,000 men, who represent more money than we cost, add more to the defensive power and strength of Great Britain, enable us to speak in a bolder tone abroad, give us greater confidence at home, than our 170,000 efficient Volunteers, of whom 34,000 are artillerymen, concerning whom Colonel Maberly, R.A., said nine years ago, ‘that a third would cause the Queen’s service no embarrassment if incorporated with the Royal Artillery to-morrow,’ who have been improving year by year from that day to this, and of whom no less than four officers of the Royal Artillery said last autumn, after inspecting certain Volunteer

Artillery Brigades, that those brigades they had then inspected were fit to act as field artillery ?

Colonel Chesney has anticipated the objection that I have reluctantly felt compelled to make as to the judgment of these most distinguished officers :—‘ It may be said by some that it is useless to quote in this matter the partial dicta of English professional soldiers, however respected. French experience may be declared by others inapplicable to our steadier and more trustworthy race. To the former it may be answered in the words of a distinguished Volunteer, to the latter in those of a practical American soldier, Colonel Higginson, words that in their simple truth are better than any laboured argument :—“ Small points are not merely a matter of punctilio, for the more perfectly a battalion is drilled on the parade ground, the more quietly it can be handled in action. Moreover, the need of uniformity is this, that in the field, soldiers of different companies, and even of different regiments, are liable to be intermingled, and a diversity of orders may throw everything into confusion. Confusion

means Bull Run." Every word that Colonel Higginson here writes for Americans applies with equal force to our Reserves; only we should not have three years allowed us to repair the loss of our Bull Run.'

But Colonel Chesney seems to forget that we have already had eleven years; that even if we have not now got three years, which we may not, but which we think we have, in which to prepare, that at any rate we have the time present; that we are yearning for that training which we are told, and which we well know, we ought to have; and that if we are not made fit to stand side by side with our best soldiers, and share their hardships and their triumphs, should stern necessity compel us to do battle for our common country, the fault rests not with you.

But of this you have had enough. I shall now endeavour to fulfil my promise, and apply, as far as I am able, what I have spoken of as essential to discipline in a corps such as our own to what actually occurred at the recent Review at Brighton. And, first, as to what I said as to the necessity of saluting. The *Army and Navy Gazette* of the 15th inst. said on this point:—

‘ The supporters of the Volunteer movement who have been residing in Brighton during the last few days, whilst admiring the general soldier-like bearing and good behaviour of our citizen soldiers when off duty, must have been pained to notice the evidence of a want of discipline in the force, as shown in the conduct of the non-commissioned officers and men towards not only their own officers, but also those of the other branches of the military service. There is nothing which tends so materially to bring the Volunteers into disrepute as this system of non-saluting of officers which has grown up, seemingly unchecked, with the force, and it is time that commanding officers took cognisance of the subject, and determined upon enforcing the salute, under all circumstances, both on and off parade. In some of the corps which attended the Brighton Review, it was pleasing to observe that for a man to pass an officer without acknowledging him was the exception rather than the rule. The Post Office, London Scottish, Artists, and the Oxford and Cambridge men, were everywhere the objects of special admiration in this respect; but the good example set by them

was productive of little or no beneficial effect upon the remaining thousands. We are not disposed to cast the blame entirely upon the non-commissioned officers and men, feeling confident that if commanding officers were once to draw their attention to the fact that in not acknowledging an officer they were committing a breach of military discipline, and were to call upon them to pay the proper compliment to all officers, irrespective of corps, but more especially to those holding commissions in the Regular Army, the order would be strictly observed.'

I think that these words present a correct picture, convey a fair description, of what generally took place, so far as my observation went. I was, for the first time, at the place of review from the Thursday before until the Tuesday after Easter. Now, in saying that this account is correct and fair, I do not mean to say either that no men of corps that are not here mentioned did salute, nor do I intend to imply that all the men of those corps who are mentioned invariably saluted. I saw men of many other corps saluting, but I saw scores who paid no attention what-

ever to the numerous officers who passed them. It must be a matter of congratulation that the urgent efforts we have made in this respect have been in some degree successful, not that even in this respect are we perfect. It is common amongst us—you can judge as well as I can whether it is universal—and you know as well as I do that it is a grave dereliction of duty whenever it is wilfully omitted. I am, however, bound to say that at such a place as Brighton, during Easter week, to salute every officer who passes you is not only a difficult thing to do, but is a very great tax upon you ; it must, however, be done. In the first place, the diversity of uniform is very great ; in some instances, as in our own, the distinction between officers and privates when in undress is not nearly sufficiently marked ; and the very large number of officers who seem to delight in parading up and down the places of public resort reminds me of the words of one of our sergeants, who was most particular in the performance of this duty : ‘It would be, perhaps, better to go down the Marine Parade with the hand fixed to the bonnet.’ On which a private who was walking

with us at the time said, 'Which hand? for you do not always salute with the same.' Remember this, however, that neither the frequency nor the difficulty can ever justify a breach in the performance of the duty, which is, at all times and in all places when you, being in uniform, meet an officer of any branch of the service, also in uniform, to acknowledge him by smartly saluting; and also that you should shoulder and turn towards any body of armed men you may meet while you are in uniform.

The next point to which I referred was the desirability of your regular, daily acknowledgment of your own officers, even while messing with them on equal social terms. As to how this delicate recognition which I asked for was carried out generally, I am unable to state; but, so far as I can judge, I am of opinion that it was attempted by nearly all, and effected by most of those who were at our pleasant head-quarters at Brighton. Next as to dress. The *Pall Mall Gazette* complimented us, saying that when we paraded for the Church service in the Pavilion, we had paid attention to our dress. But I think that next year we must rather more

strictly define what may be worn throughout the week. Having two distinct uniforms—it is impossible for us to present at any time absolute uniformity. But I am thankful to say, considerable attention was paid by you to your dress; and I am not aware that our uniform was in any instance so grossly misrepresented as was frequently the case in the streets and on the Parade.

I noticed an artilleryman with his blue tunic and a light grey pair of mufti trousers. Some men wore their tunics open and revealed mufti waistcoats to view; some wore coloured ties; many wore forage caps, and perhaps some one other article of uniform, and the rest plain clothes; some were very dirty and untidy; so that, on the whole, it cannot be denied that our service did not show up well in this respect—that with every wish to form as favourable an opinion of them as possible, it was well-nigh impossible to deny that, not soldiers alone, but many outsiders, would take away from the Parade, especially on Sunday, ideas unfavourable to the discipline and order of the Volunteer Service, so far as it could be judged by the

thousands of Metropolitan Volunteers then at Brighton.*

This brings me to a subject which I approach with regret, and to which I did not before allude, simply because I had no idea that any allusion was necessary. I mean the noisy and beery jollity of the day, which ripened in many cases into drunkenness in the evening, and in not a few cases in open daylight on Easter-day. This regret is greatly heightened by the fact that one of our own men was drunk when in uniform on Easter night. True, he was dismissed by Lord Elcho on Monday morning before the hour of parade; yet never again can we proudly say that we have never had a single man drunk when in uniform and brought to the place in which he then was for duty. We may perhaps, however, derive some comfort from the fact that with nearly 2,000 men through our ranks,

* N.B. Lord Ranelagh and others have, however, fairly pointed out that the immense majority of the Volunteers at Brighton behaved well, and that this was without any restriction or coercive measures. It seems to me that the comparison which was drawn, as to how our soldiers or militiamen would have behaved under a similar condition of freedom, is not to the purpose. For a force voluntarily enrolled for patriotic purposes is to my mind worth nothing at all if it is not moral, sober, and respectable.

with well-nigh twelve years of service, the fact that one man alone has thus discredited our uniform stamps us as respectable. I need hardly add that the severe sentence which was passed upon him by our chief has been thoroughly approved by the regiment; and that, unpleasant as the duty is, we regard it as an obligation that we owe to the service at large to inform all the officers commanding corps in London of the fact that No. —, Private A. B., has been dismissed.

The next reference that I made was to straggling. Now, from the comparative silence of the various newspapers on this point, I gather that there was a decided improvement in respect to straggling. The *Volunteer Service Gazette* complains of the number of Volunteers in uniform present on the ground, but not taking part in the review. Doubtless some of these men were stragglers, but others were, to my own knowledge, country Volunteers, some from as far off as Cheshire; the fact of being in uniform facilitates their moving about on the review-ground. But the same paper complains, and with justice, of the stragglers who leave their corps, and go to the

railway station. It says, 'very much stricter order is required with these gentry.' With this we must all agree, for they not only fill up the trains in which others ought to travel, but they disobey distinct and positive orders in leaving their corps. It would be well if, next year, as soon as the train was pretty well filled with stragglers, it were to start, and be shunted a mile or two from Brighton, and not sent on to London until the last train had passed. But on Tuesday we were all stragglers; there was no order, rule, or system; all went up to the station, and, when there, few indeed there were that did not help to make up the mass of pushing, noisy men. No longer was any discipline thought of; each for himself was the order of the day. An unfriendly critic would have been able to draw a very dark picture of the return of the Volunteers from Brighton on Easter Tuesday.

My next point was marching. You will remember that I said we did not march long enough, or frequently enough. Now, on this point, one Volunteer Assistant-Surgeon tells me that in his corps 'two men were thoroughly done up, though there were a good dozen who

could not have stood much more work than we had, and more than that who wouldn't have been worth anything for a march on the following day.' This was out of a strength of only 260. He adds: 'There were three or four that should not have turned out at all, and who, I'm certain, will be the worse for the work for weeks to come.'

In our own corps one of our Assistant-Surgeons informs me that two men did not come out because they were not well enough to go through the day's work, two fell out, and five more should not have been out—this is out of 366 men. Now, it cannot be denied that the day's work was stiffish, but, on the other hand, the weather was perfect; a pleasant, cool breeze, too cold for those of us who were mounted, enabled many to go through the work, who, if it had been hot, as in 1870, would have succumbed. You must remember that these men all went voluntarily to Brighton, and this does not afford us any clue to the whole number in either our own or the other corps who remained in London confessedly unfit for a hard day's work. This is mainly owing to our not having any medical

examination of Volunteer recruits, or at any period during the term of service ; many a man who is fit when he joins is unfit that day ten years. When men have heart-disease they are liable to die at any time, but certainly no such men ought to be allowed to remain in the service. Yet there have been some deaths on the parade-ground from this cause.

I have said that the day's march was stiffish ; we were for eight hours under arms, with no interval of rest exceeding ten or fifteen minutes ; but no man can say that we did nearly as much, let alone fighting, as we might have to do, would have to do, on service. Also remember we had no great-coat, knapsack, or kit to carry, and the day was cool. Compare this easy day's jaunt with work done under the most unfavourable circumstances. When the Guides marched into the camp at Delhi in June 1857, three troops of cavalry and six companies of infantry 'had marched, in the hottest time of the year, 580 miles in twenty-two days,' or nearly twenty-two miles a day for twenty-two consecutive days, under the broiling heat of a Bengal sun in June. Or again: the movable

column under General Nicholson marched in July of the same year forty-four miles in twenty-one hours.

I am surely more than justified in saying that we do not nearly attend enough to our marching. Before we could take the field a great weeding must take place, and many good fellows without physical strength for active and hard work must leave, or be removed from the service. 'Legs and feet,' as I have before remarked, are essential to infantry.

There are very many other points to which I should have drawn your attention; but not only have I been already too long, but I am writing this only a few hours before I have to speak it, and neither time nor train will wait for me. Intentionally I avoid all criticism or even mention of the actual Review. I have been asked very many questions by you about it; it would be easy to give answers. It would, however, be wrong for me to criticise the movements of the day.

I will merely conclude with an earnest appeal to you on behalf of our own regiment. Now I am clearly of opinion that one chief reason that we are so united and enjoy such

good fellowship is, that, while we try to be strict in all essentials, we try to exercise judgment and to allow very considerable laxity in non-essentials; we do not attempt when off parade, when not on duty, to make any distinction of rank. The London Scottish is, as it were, a new clan; there is a brotherhood in this new clan, consisting as it does of Highlanders and Lowlanders, of citizens and dwellers in the country, of men born in England of Scottish parents, and of men who have wisely learned to admire Scotland as represented by some Scotch lass; but every clan has its chief, its leaders, its officers; and the more readily these officers are acknowledged, the better is the whole body, the closer the fellowship—the closer are those composing it bound together in unity, peace, and goodwill. ‘Make a man proud of himself and his corps,’ says Sir Garnet Wolseley, ‘and he can always be depended upon.’ ‘The soldier is a peculiar animal that can alone be brought to the highest efficiency by inducing him to believe that he belongs to a regiment which is infinitely superior to the others around him.’

As you are not soldiers, I suppose you are

not peculiar animals, neither dare I say, or even think, that our 'regiment is infinitely superior to the others' in our service; but we know we are not the worst. Conscious as we are of defects, we know that we wish to overcome them; imperfect we are, and not, I hope, too much puffed up by the flattery poured out on us by nearly the whole daily press on Easter Tuesday. Yet would I have you proud—reasonably and judiciously proud—of the London Scottish, determined always to uphold its honour, firmly resolved that you and your regiment shall be as efficient as your efforts and your officers' efforts can make it. Quit you like men. Strive hard that even those who despise the Volunteer Service and think lightly of your patriotic endeavours, may speak well of the London Scottish, may testify that the London Scottish would be no disgrace to the Highland Brigade in which our dear old colonel, Lord Clyde, would have placed us.

IV.

Delivered May 4, 1871.

THE examination recently instituted has not only done good to the officers and sergeants, who have mastered the work set them to do, and have passed the examination, but their increased knowledge has already told on you, and has enabled us to institute an examination for privates, of whom thirty-eight have passed, who, acting as a little leaven, will, I hope, leaven the whole regiment. This has given a general spurt to the regiment, and, coming just as you have to learn how to use a breech-loading rifle as well as the new drill, has led to increased interest in your duties and stronger musters on parade. This is not only the case with us, for I am right glad to hear that other metropolitan regiments are being influenced in a like manner; especially the Queen's and Inns of Court regiments, which,

from old associations and from their belonging to our own brigade (the Grey Brigade)* we cannot but be interested in. The 19th M. A. V., too, are maintaining their numbers.

From this quicker flow of life amongst us have come recruits to join us. We, specially, at all times require recruits, for we have an exceptional and annual drain upon the corps, in the men who leave for India and the colonies, or return to Scotland. Many of you are merely in London on your way to the colonies. India and the colonies swarm with Scotsmen. What they have been you are, strangers and sojourners in this land (we have, however, made a new home for you in the London Scottish), learning some business, by which you hope to make a fortune in the East or West, as have those who have preceded you. Our resignations have varied from twenty-five to one hundred and seven in a year. But this is not all. When members pay their subscription, but do not attend to their duties,

* The Grey Brigade, consisting of 15th (London Scottish), 19th (Working Men's College), 22nd (Queen's Westminster), 23rd (Inns of Court), was the first Brigade in the Volunteer Service made up of regiments not previously connected in any way.

whether from increased years, responsibilities, or from a natural diminution of interest in the work after a few years' service, these we place on the list of Honorary Reserve, and we have now on that list 121 who have been effective members. Some of these find substitutes before retiring to the Reserve, three of them are now represented by their sons. But men who neither drill nor pay are simply struck off the roll. We began this plan in 1866, and we have struck off from year to year 141, 159, 40, 37, 18, which being added to our 121 reserve men amounts to 516, or nearly our entire strength in 1870, and to more than our entire strength, in 1867, 1868, or 1869; so that with this continual weeding going on, we have now of all ranks only 95 men who have served in this regiment for ten years.

Since January 1, 1861, we have had, up to March last, 936 recruits, the following numbers having joined year by year: 61, 39, 82, 64, 78, 117, 115, 97, 64, 130, 89. Now our only recruiting parties are the members of the regiment; we can never receive into our ranks any large body of men, such as Broadwood's Company in the Queen's, Price's Candle Company

in the 19th M.R.V., the St. Mark's College Company in the South Middlesex, or the Clothing Department Company in the London Irish. One such company was offered to us once ; but although the firm employing the men was Scottish, and three-quarters of the men were Scotsmen, it was judged necessary to refuse the offer, on account of the residue being Englishmen. This necessitates our picking up our recruits one by one, and as our minimum standard of height is 5 ft. 6 in. the minimum of A and B Companies being 5 ft. 8½ in.—higher perhaps than any other body in the kingdom ; as every man has to be proposed and seconded by some member, as if for nomination to a club, and then accepted by the commanding officer and captains ; has to provide his uniform, and pay a subscription—the greater is the necessity laid upon each one of you to work hard in your endeavour to obtain fit and proper men to serve in our ranks. But as recruits join, stay but a short time, and then are taken away from us by the necessities of their civil occupations, we perhaps feel more strongly than very many other corps the necessity for simplicity in drill. At this moment we have more than

two hundred men in our ranks of less than eighteen months' service.

But simplicity in drill is of no less importance to the Militia, and to the Army under its changed circumstances, than to ourselves. The militiamen are, as a rule, far less educated, their faculties of a lower order, and far less exercised than Volunteers. Now, if they were even thoroughly taught their drill as recruits, they have time to forget nearly the whole of it in the eleven months that elapse before they are next drilled. As a matter of fact, they cannot be taught their drill thoroughly in less than six months. If, however the drill were rendered as simple as it could without much difficulty be made, and if it were based on the most natural principles, such as are used daily by all men who walk about at all, they would not only have less to remember than at present, but they would more readily pick up what they forget during the eleven months in which they are not exercised. But as we are now about to discharge our soldiers after three years' service, hoping that when they are reserves we may be able to avail ourselves of them during war, the more simple the drill, the

less rust will have to be rubbed off them when, and if, they present themselves for active service.

I have alluded in a previous lecture to the ease with which we moved in the experimental drill which we were allowed to try in 1868, by reason of the simplicity of such rules as—‘The faces of the men, or the direction in which they are moving, will, for the time being, be the front of the company, or battalion;’ ‘The right or left hands of the men will always, for the time being, be the right or left of the company or battalion;’ ‘Companies and the battalion will be drilled without reference to front or rear rank.’ If some such rules as these were substituted for the rules at present existing, the movements would be greatly simplified. An outcry has been made against them, but not louder than that which only three years ago was made against the position in which we placed our captains, guides, and markers, or than was made against our simply turning right-about in the place of the complicated movement of countermarching by subdivisions round the centre; against deployments made on the march, and moving dia-

gonally by the shortest lines, instead of at right angles ; yet each one of these now has a place in our field exercise regulations. Well indeed did Lord Elcho say, ' Under this system of drill, whilst great relief and simplicity of movement and formation are obtained, there ought to be no confusion.' We found that there was none. Our attention is naturally just now directed to the Prussian Army, and I am about to speak of some of the drill movements of that army ; but at the same time it will be well that we should watch closely, and study carefully the changes that the French will doubtless introduce in their drill and military system generally when the fight between the Government and the Commune* is decided, for not only were the foundations of the Prussian system laid immediately after Jena, but General Trochu, who will probably have some share in the necessary reorganisation, has said : ' The teaching of great disasters, which upset alike the practice and the theory of existing systems, does more for the progress of military science

* N.B. This was spoken on May 4. Already have the French commenced the re-organisation of their army. We should watch their proceedings carefully, as we shall probably learn much from them.

than the teaching of great victories, by which the practice and the theory of existing systems are confirmed.'

On March 29 last I reminded you of the great importance that 'the company' possessed in the eyes of the Prussians, showing from 'The Tactical Retrospect' that it was alike their school of instruction and their unit of manœuvre. I now ask your attention to a most lucid, intelligent, and instructive paper, 'Studies on the Recent War,' which has appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* of April. I trust that you will read, mark, and thoroughly learn this excellent paper, which simply tells you a thousand times more than I can.

There are not many men in England competent to write such an instructive paper; even those who do not profess to be interested in the military details which are there so ably set forth, cannot but be interested in the essay itself.

Before entering upon its consideration I would remark that we do not sufficiently remember that war alone can test the value of an army, the soundness of a military system; hence it happens that peace practice, however

like to war it may be made, has the word 'sham,' which we apply to peace-battles, stamped on very much of the work then done. What is done in peace has so little resemblance to what is done in war, that a recent writer, whom I have previously quoted, criticises with much sharpness the 'umpire system,' under which, during a sham fight, an umpire judges, condemns, or approves the movements, as seems to him fit. He condemns this system, saying that very many things have been done during the recent war which would have been objected to by an umpire and declared by him to be wrong. Doubtless this must ever be the case. Without it war would be reduced to a simple game of chess; and the men—who after all must win the battle, and who if physically unfit, like our present army recruits, no amount of skilful manœuvring can prevent being beaten—would exercise no more influence on the success, or loss, of a day than the wooden chessmen with which we play a game of chess. Now, in peace we must have such simple rules, the best, most practical, and most probable that we can make; for in peace the men, however unequal in discipline and in the skill

with which they can use the rifle, exercise no more influence, unless it be in their power of marching should the manœuvres cover a very large space of ground, than do chessmen in a game of chess. A sham fight, like a game of chess, depends on the generals who play the game, not on the pawns which are moved. How different this to actual war, as Sir W. Napier in his history of the Peninsula War says of Sylla: ‘ Experience taught him that the speed of one legion, the inactivity of another, the obstinacy, the ignorance, or treachery of a subordinate officer, was sufficient to mar the best concerted plan—that the intervention of a shower of rain, an unexpected ditch, or any apparently trivial accident, might determine the fate of a whole army.’

Yet can there be no better practice for war than that which, while approaching as near as possible to war, is as far off as life and death. ‘ Although manœuvres should give as true a picture as possible of war, still the difference between these in the means at disposal, as well as in their object, is so great, that it is necessary from the commencement to accept

certain anomalies which are incidental to manœuvres in spite of their undeniable advantage.'

Now the principles of military science may be as surely acquired as the principles of banking, law, or farming. 'War is no conjectural science,' said Napoleon. Yet what Mr. Darwin says of men may, without much alteration, apply to wars, campaigns, and battles. 'No two individuals of the same race are quite alike.' 'We may compare millions of faces, and each will be distinct.' 'The muscles are eminently variable; there were found 295 muscular variations in 36 subjects.' Now this variability only leads to closer study and more intense application on the part of the medical leaders. So is it with military science: no two battles are quite alike; of the thousands that have taken place each is distinct. It is the part of the soldier to study every campaign, to ascertain the peculiarities of each, to go to the root of the matter and find out the reason of success or failure in each case, and on the result of all to found his theories and to lay down his rules and principles of war. Yet, for all this, he can never arrive at such clear and plain

conclusions as to be able to lay down one rule for every case, but must expect to find, whenever called upon to test his theories, that the campaign he is conducting is like all those gone before in that 'each is distinct, no two are quite alike.'

Mr. Darwin tells us that 'the chief arteries so frequently run in abnormal courses that it has been found useful for surgical purposes to calculate from 12,000 corpses how often each course prevails.' Military science presenting the same features in this respect as the human frame, it is not to be wondered at that Cæsar, Wellington, and Napoleon were students, in the highest meaning of the word, of the science of their profession. I need not say that, almost of necessity, a great general must be a voluminous writer, for Wellington's mere despatches occupy several volumes, and it is well known that our great Duke devoted part of every day while on service to study, and that Napoleon carried with him a well-selected library. Those men who think soldiering an easy profession know nothing about what they are speaking, and if they judge by the idlers who are to be found amongst us, it would be as

fair to judge of lawyers from Philip Firmin or doctors from Mr. Bob Sawyer.

This digression will not be wasted if it induces you to regard the profession of arms with the respect which its difficulty and delicacy have a right to demand. The hero of the day, Count Von Moltke, has not only been a student for years, but has studied everything that has come in his way in any of the seven languages that he knows. As was said of him by one of his countrymen on Monday last, 'though he can keep silent in seven languages, the lecture which he has given in 1870-71 will not easily be forgotten.' While this is all strictly true of strategy, and while tactics—'the higher combination of three arms in the field of battle'—require hardly less, if any less, study, it in no way applies to drill, which cannot be too simple, 'to move to front and rear, to right and left, small and handy bodies of men, each with independent power of extending and closing in every way—these are the only manœuvres useful.'

As the Edinburgh Reviewer shows, the principle on which the Prussians have mainly manœuvred during the recent campaign has

been by company columns, or each battalion broken up into its four companies, each under his own captain, who has thus a 'small and handy body of men' consisting of about 250 men all told. Now if we are to adopt this plan we require, as I pointed out in my first lecture, thoroughly trained officers, and, as I said at another time, an increased number of men in each company. At present we are not allowed to manœuvre with more than 64 men at any review, and as a matter of fact we seldom if ever have so many men per company, owing to the small number 60 being our minimum and 100 our maximum establishment.

The peace establishment in Prussia is 125, war establishment 250 per company. I may remark, in passing, that if in our Army some such plan is adopted, and instead of ten—recently twelve—we have only four companies, or five, one being the dépôt company, we should add to the importance of our captains, and, while we reduce their number, we might increase their pay, and even then save some expenditure.

It is the opinion of this able reviewer, and of

very many other men who are competent to judge, that there has never been any system possessing 'such lightness and mobility' as this, and that 'no modern army has felt its way to tactics so light and handy.' The lamented author of 'The Tactical Retrospect,' Captain May, who was unfortunately killed during the recent campaign in the North of France, says that when 'old rules are suddenly altered, no one knows where to turn;' yet he adds, 'the latitude given in our regulations concerning company columns is so broad that it is only necessary to stretch a point when an emergency requires it, in order to meet any case that may arise.'

It is very much to be hoped that this system of company columns will be tried in England, and as, if there are men enough in them, they must work well, that the system may find a place ere long in our drill-book.* With us 'the undivided control and management of companies' is vested in the captains, who ought, so far as they can, 'to make them-

* Since this was written, the Engineers under Colonel Chesney have had an experimental parade at Aldershot in the presence of Sir Hope Grant and his staff, when this formation was used.

selves acquainted with the character of every man under their command.' So is it with the Prussians, of whom their earnest critic writes :

‘ The influence of the officer commanding should not be exercised directly on the soldiers, but exclusively through his four captains commanding companies, who alone should work directly on the men. A tactical employment of this nature responds completely to the principles on which the education and formation of our army rests. The captain commanding a company is the only officer between whom and the soldier a personal relation exists in peace time. He knows every individual soldier in the most intimate manner, and the soldier, on his part, is aware that his captain so knows him. It is upon this relation that the uncommon influence rests which he, above all other officers, has over the individual soldier, as well as over the whole company. The soldier sees his nearest home in his company, and he has, under all circumstances, a decided feeling for his captain, even though it be one of hatred. In most cases, however, it is a feeling of love, confidence, and respect. The intimate and continual intercourse between

them allows no room on either side for acting ; each must appear as he really is, and thus, together with the bad qualities, the good ones also which they both possess, must come to light. They become accustomed to one another, have their fits of ill-temper at times on both sides ; but when at length the hour comes that they are finally to part, there is an earnest feeling of sorrow which cannot be suppressed. With regard to the higher grades of officers, such as officers commanding battalions or regiments, the soldier, on the contrary, has no personal relation with them, neither have these officers with him ; he has a respect for them according to regulation, otherwise he is, for the most part, indifferent.

‘ At the very most he knows whether his general keeps him long at drill and annoys him or not, and particularly whether he has any ridiculous habits. It requires very especial qualities in the higher ranks in order to make a real impression on the person of the soldier, and he who does not possess these qualities can at most try, by acting and coquetry, to make himself take with the men, but which, in the long run, generally tends to an opposite effect.

However proud of his position a colonel may be at the head of his regiment, the soldier looks on his captain as by far the more important personage; and should the colonel take to bullying the captain on parade, to show the soldiers what a great man he is, the result usually is that the soldier respects his captain the less, but certainly the colonel not the more. The beautiful relation between the soldier and his captain is a corner-stone of our army, and not one of the least firm ones. The highest reward which the soldier can obtain during his service springs from his captain, viz. the confidence of his company leader; and he, on his part, will find in the attachment of his subordinate the most precious reward which will fall to him in his lifetime. Of all the annoyances with which the sorely tried life of a company leader is so rich, the smallest part is caused by his subordinates.

‘ This relation should guide us in our tactical formations.

‘ The company fights independently, not because such a body is within compass of the human voice, but because the company is a magnet which attracts the scattered elements

by means of the feeling of the soldier that it is his home, and through the person of his captain, who, being familiar with all his men, can guide them with a word or even a look.'

This close and intimate relation cannot be said to exist between our officers and yourselves, and it is impossible to deny that this is one of the great disadvantages that we labour under in this vast metropolis; our tie is neither residential nor business, either of which, for the practical purpose of drill, is more useful than the national tie which binds us; we live far from each other; we seldom meet, except at the range, at golf or curling, and I have often thought that if we could take some large building, in some respects like a barrack or English college, in which many of our bachelors could live, messing in common and having their rooms at a moderate expense, that we should find the result to be even greater union; our regiment would be better, you would become more intimately acquainted with each other, and you would probably live at a less cost. Could not some such bachelor

home be formed, as a regimental headquarters?

But I suppose there are no men serving anywhere who are more generally known to each other than those serving in our isolated corps throughout the country. Now if the officers of these corps were all thoroughly instructed, and if when the battalion met for drill much of the manœuvring was done by means of these simple company columns, we should add to the value of these corps, we should have throughout the country men trained on this sensible and simple Prussian plan. The reviewer states that skirmishing was introduced by the French as a means of 'advancing against a village through enclosures,' and therefore as an exceptional movement. So company columns have during peace been the exception not the rule, in the Prussian service. It seems probable that what has been the exception will hereafter be the rule, and that this discovery of the Germans marks an era in tactics, as did the discovery of skirmishing by the French, the use of the phalanx by the Macedonians, or the open formation of the Roman legion against which the Macedonian

phalanx could not stand, of which Sir Walter Raleigh said, 'The Roman armies were embattled in so excellent a form as I know not whether any nation beside them have used, either before or since.'

If you read this *Edinburgh Review* article you will find many instances of the use, with striking effect, of company columns; but you will also find that, as in Bohemia, so in France, 'the tactics of these company columns consist in throwing out swarms of skirmishers, their supports from time to time resolving themselves into the same, the whole of the front line now bearing some likeness to the confused attack of a horde of irregular cavalry.' In another place we read: 'We (Prussians) can, without too much risk, venture on a greater division and intermixture of our companies;' so they had divisions, brigades, regiments, battalions, and companies mingled together. I need hardly add that it is well-nigh impossible to conceive a greater trial of discipline. Such is the discipline and training of the Prussians that when they have been winning they have not suffered from this daring experiment. The French could not attempt such a thing. 'Perhaps at

no time in modern French history since social equality became the ruling passion of the nation, certainly not since extreme looseness of order became the national method of fighting, could French soldiers, separated from their regiments, have been safely relied on to obey any chance officer who rallied them.' Prince Frederick Charles, in 'A Military Memorial,' says: 'The French have no idea of a well-ordered retreat; they try to outstrip one another, and their flight becomes a general *saute qui peut*.' Nor can even the Prussians be depended on to carry their system to a successful issue in the face of superior numbers, unless supported by a strong reserve, which is shown by the defeat they suffered at the hands of the Hanoverians at Langensalza.

'If the situation had been properly understood, a strong line of distinction ought to have been drawn between the main body, which should have attacked the enemy with energy, and a strong reserve posted within reach of the battle, towards the rear, with special orders not to take part in the fight either partially or generally, but to reserve itself for the one purpose of forming a rallying-point, behind

which an orderly retreat might have been made along the left road to Gotha.

‘But the battle really showed a very different aspect from this in its formation, and the reserve was quite unsuitable to these requirements. After a short time, not only the advanced guard and the main body, but also a part of the weak reserve was engaged in the first line, and the companies were all mixed up one with another in the greatest confusion. Without the slightest necessity, one company after another was hurled into the chaos of the fight. Very soon all were swallowed up in the front line, and thus all power of movement was lost.

‘When the Hanoverians at length attacked these weak lines with superior force, that happened which was inevitable—they were broken and their component parts driven back. No reserve was at hand, and thus any rallying was impossible. The case was nearly the same as that of Trautenau, and the position of the forces was of a similar nature. This example proves in a very evident manner, like the other, that a deployed line, long exposed to fire, has not sufficient power in itself to resist a

vigorous attack, and that it can only prevail by having a strong reserve, under the immediate command of the general-in-chief, in a defensive position in the rear, which will serve to rally the beaten troops, and break the shock of the enemy's columns.'

I firmly believe that the British Army can be depended on, can be trusted to do, in this respect, whatever any other troops can be fairly called upon to do. Witness the honourable and difficult retreat of Sir John Moore, with Marshal Soult pressing him. In this respect the Army resembles the Prussians; but we Volunteers, with our present training, would inevitably prove far worse than the French. To an English soldier an officer is simply an officer, whether belonging to his own regiment, or even to another branch of the service. Obedience would be yielded to any general rallying his men. Intimate relations never exist between our officers placed high in command and the men serving under them. The chief beauty in our regimental system is that much friendly feeling does exist between our regimental officers and their men. When the lieutenant-colonel of my old regiment died, an immense majority of the men

voluntarily raised a subscription towards paying for a stone to be placed over one of the strictest but best soldiers who ever wore a red coat. But Sir G. Wolseley says: 'Whatever may be the reason of it, it is nevertheless a fact, that up to the present time we have never had an English commander who succeeded in calling forth any great enthusiasm for himself or the cause in hand.' And he then, in a few words, compares Wellington and Napoleon, pointing out how much the latter was able to perform by the enthusiasm which he always excited in the breasts of his men. The opinion that only a known, tried, and trusted general could accomplish great things, and that confidence on the part of his men was an essential element of his success, is very old, for 'Hannibal, speaking of the elder Scipio, derided him, although a brave and skilful man, for that, being unknown to his soldiers, he should presume to oppose himself to a general who could call to each man under his command by name: thus inculcating that troops must be trained in the peculiar method of a commander, if the latter is to achieve anything great.* That in modern times

* Prince Frederick Charles, who is one of the wisest and

English generals have failed to win the affections of their men, cannot be denied ; but that it is the fault of our system, and does not rest in our national character, seems shown by the powerful influence which Henry V., Cromwell, and even Clive exercised over their men, and which gave Nelson absolute sway over so many of our splendid sailors.

But with ourselves, such admixture would be fatal ; the case that I gave you of the officer who did not find fault with the man for not saluting, because, though belonging to his battalion, he did not belong to his company, is sufficient to stamp our patent deficiencies on such a point as I am now considering ; for such a feeling, if not universal, is common. The rarity of saluting, the general kind of feeling that the officers of one corps are as nothing to the men of a different corps, all prove our radical weakness. Now, nothing tends to foster this, even if it is not at the root of the

best of living soldiers says : ' That moral chapter of the art of war which springs from knowledge of the human heart, constitutes the better part of the greatness of a general. It is a gift which nature rarely grants, and which is still less to be acquired, but which the soldier feels and which goes to his heart at once.'

matter, which I incline to believe it is, so much as the hundred and one uniforms allowed in the Volunteer service. 'There should be no great difference in uniform,' says the wise Prussian officer. Some few counties, as Stafford, Somerset, and Surrey, have a distinctive county uniform, and perhaps Surrey will now send a Surrey battalion into the proposed Berkshire camp; this will do good, will encourage the Surrey Volunteer in the belief, that not his own officer alone, but all other officers, are to be obeyed and treated with like respect.

I am, however, certain that, if ever the 190,000 men of whom the Volunteer service is composed are to be something better 'than a rabble of battalions,' the first step in this most essential reform must be the selection of a national Volunteer uniform; in which, of course, such distinctions as Rifle, Highland, and Light Infantry would be maintained, as in the Army. The recognition of this necessity, together with an order from the highest authorities that it was obligatory on all Volunteers to recognise all officers, as if they were their own officers, would lay the foundation for a

complete and perfect organization. The necessary changes in uniform might be made gradually.

With the exception of such careful practice as was under the direct personal supervision of an officer, when each shot was made deliberately and strictly in accordance with regulation, we had our first experience of breechloaders at Brighton. I do not know what you thought of it, but I was immensely struck with the well-nigh inconceivable power that was placed in each of your hands, and the well-nigh impossibility of sufficiently impressing on each of your minds the necessity for caution, consideration, thought, and judgment in the use of this power. How easy must be its abuse, and consequent waste and uselessness! But I was perhaps thinking yet more of the difficulty in getting you into the habit of pressing the trigger with something more than judgment, I will even say—do not laugh—with solemnity. Your power now is like that of fire or water, almost infinite, but apt to be wasted, and to get the mastery, and so, worse than useless, hurtful. The recent campaign will probably lead to the modification of our instructions as to firing. As the Prussians

were the first to use breechloaders, so they alone have had the uncommon test of three campaigns to try them. We have not yet had much direct information as to the lesson they have recently learned; but I see no great reason to suppose that these will materially differ from the Bohemian campaign, except perhaps, as they have now been opposed by an infinitely better weapon, we may expect to find they will lose some faith in the needle-gun.

Now our instructions are—‘There are two descriptions of firing, volley and independent firing.’ ‘Independent firing may, under very exceptional circumstances, be permitted.’ There being only two descriptions of firing, one of which is only allowed under very exceptional circumstances, it would seem that the other, volley firing, was intended to be generally used. Let us compare with this the Prussian experience of 1866 :—

‘At present we have skirmishing fire, quick fire, and volley fire; and here, at the commencement, the maxim may be laid down, that in war volley firing is only possible in the rarest and most exceptional cases, and, as a general rule, there can be no such thing.

‘ This certainly goes against all our previous conceptions, at least those according to regulation. In our exercises at present we have fallen into a complete volley mania; volley firing is held good in all cases, not for those alone in which the leader says that a volley may possibly be effective, but in all. When a leader does not well know what to do, he immediately fires a volley. Whether the enemy who is thus volleyed is perhaps 800 paces distant, or whether he is out of sight of the greater number of the men, or whether he has advanced in a line of skirmishers or in column, it is all the same—he is at once volleyed. Cases have even been known in which leaders who have been strictly admonished from high quarters not to be inactive have fired volleys into the blue sky, which at least showed that they took an interest in the matter in hand. This may be called the fire of desperation. These volleys, which pervade all our exercises, and which are in such high favour with many officers, owe their existence to the circumstance that they appear to the officers to give a warrant that the troops are at the moment in the hand of the leader. The well-

delivered volley, with no after-popping, is balsam to the heart of the martinet. . . .

‘A company standing under cover, which can advance with the greatest coolness to deliver a volley at the decisive moment before the fire is given, is generally an open mark for the enemy’s fire, and this moment, as a rule, will be sufficient to render the whole volley nugatory.

‘But what tells especially against the volley is, that it requires from the leader more than he is able to fulfil. Should he truly estimate the point with the coolest and strictest attention, and judge the distance instinctively in a sufficiently approximate degree, he must then further turn the attention of his men (who, being under cover, cannot see the course of the battle) to the same point, which is a matter of great difficulty. All words of command must follow each other like lightning; each individual must calmly and collectedly aim at least in the direction of the object. If even one of these factors is wanting, the result will be equally null. In this everything is staked on one card; while in skirmishing, or quick fire, an error of the leader can never be so destructive.

'The advocates of volley firing may perhaps here remark that, above all, only cool and able leaders are fit for their position, and that with such only the fine discipline which is requisite for this mode of firing can be maintained. But this ideal rule must be taken *cum grano salis* in real life. If requirements are made which cannot be fulfilled, discontent is the result, or despair, and the effort falls short of that which might in all cases be attained. No company ever consists of 200 cool and courageous heroes. In every company there are many elements which cannot be depended on; and if one captain could be found so cool as to answer all the conditions, as well as his men, this cannot furnish a rule for the 1,000 remaining ones. A well-conducted quick or skirmishing fire is the best to guarantee great results with the least loss. A volley is merely an exceptional incident. It is necessary and possible in action against cavalry. Horses are surprised and frightened back by means of it which easily become accustomed to the constant clatter of the skirmishers. Also, a volley may be allowable in surprises, when an intact body, which has hitherto been concealed, suddenly

attacks in action by means of a volley. In this case, it can be deliberated on and prepared calmly beforehand.*

Volleys against cavalry, when at close quarters, must ever be effective. 'That the breech-loader, when held by steady hands, is more than a match for the charge of any cavalry, was proved,' beyond Gravelotte, just before dark on that memorable day, 'when a Uhlan regiment was repulsed by the fire of a body of French infantry'—no less than against 'the desperate assault of Michel's Cuirassiers at Woerth, when the gallant regiments that rode up to the muzzles of the needle-gun were swept away in absolute destruction.' I do not see why, if you are trained and practised, your rifles should not be 'held with steady hands.' There are a great many most excellent shots in our ranks, and your capacities are such that an immense majority of you can be taught to shoot; and I really believe that you would have discipline, and courage, and sense enough to know that the steadier your rifles were held, the more deadly would be their stern message,

* 'The Prussian Infantry,' pp. 33-8.

and the less chance would the opposing horsemen have of reaching you.

But many of our men do not shoot; for my own part, I think men who never shoot should not be allowed to remain in the service, or rather should be placed in companies by themselves to learn to drill, and in time of service perform duties of which fighting should not be one; and this is the answer I would make to the person who I saw somewhere a few days ago, but where I forget, objecting to the statement of the Musketry Regulations that 'a man who cannot shoot is an incumbrance to his battalion. Such a man may be a good cook, nurse, or clerk, but he cannot be a useful fighting man, as an infantry soldier. The object of manœuvring is to place a man in the best position to use his weapon effectively; if, when placed there, he knows not how to use it, as a fighting animal his powers are nil.' This official dictum and the sense of the first part of the Musketry Regulations often make me think that a Militia regiment might with advantage spend the greater part of its alternate training in learning to shoot—all men who have been drilled one year shooting the next,

and *vice versa*. This would be much the same system as has been recently adopted for the coast-guardsmen, who work a ship one year and practice gunnery the next. A recruit, when passed in drill, should be taught to shoot well before being allowed to go home. When the Militiamen are trained for six months on joining, doubtless this will be done.


Do you not think we are keeping our comrades the Volunteer Yeomanry far too much out of sight? They train for the most part in the provincial towns of their respective counties, are neither seen nor heard of by the London press, and are in consequence well-nigh forgotten by us all. The Yeomanry Cavalry are more than 15,000 strong, double the strength of the regular cavalry on the Home establishment, and cost 81,000*l.* a year. There can be no question that very much more might be made of this considerable force than we at present make of it. Never has cavalry outpost duty been better done, though we ourselves in the Peninsula war fully equalled that of the Prussians in the recent campaign. There can be no sufficient reason why our sturdy, intelligent, and active Yeomen should not be made of equal use with

the world-renowned Uhlans. If our Yeomanry officers were all taught how to use a map, and if each would study the map of his own county—if our best cavalry officers were sent to instruct the Yeomanry regiments in taking up posts, in reconnoitring the county, in carrying messages, in learning to see, think, judge, and act upon their judgment in reporting to their officers—we should soon have in almost every county first-rate cavalry outposts. ‘Superiority in outpost duty, and the dash and intelligence of Prussian cavalry in obtaining correct information, on which success in war depends more than on any other single element, made Weisseburg, Forbach, Courcelles, and Beaumont surprises for the French.’ As with the French now, and with the Austrians in Bohemia, neglect of this duty led to disaster.

Captain Hozier says : ‘Although operations had been conducted in its own country, where every information concerning the Prussian movements could have been readily obtained from the inhabitants, the Austrian cavalry had made no raid against the flank or rear of the advancing army, had cut off no ammunition or provision trains, had

broken up no railway communications behind the marching columns, had destroyed no telegraph lines, had made no hidden or night attacks against the outposts, so as to make the weary infantry stand to their arms and lose their night's rest.' No excuse can ever be permitted for ignorance of the movements of an enemy, however well he may mask his forces. Napoleon said: 'It is a fact that when we are not in a desert, but in a peopled country, if the general is not well instructed, it is because he is ignorant of his trade.'

Now I venture to say that, with our Yeomanry trained as they could easily be trained, it would be wellnigh impossible that our generals could ever make a mistake from lack of correct information as to the movements of an enemy, should an enemy ever succeed in landing in this country. We have only to look into the Army List to see that our Yeomanry officers are taken for the most part from amongst county gentlemen. The duties they would have to learn would be interesting and to them easy: they could teach their men, when not out for training, for an officer or sergeant might instruct six or eight men, who



might meet, as we do, in plain clothes on a summer's evening, and thus occupy the non-hunting season in a profitable and pleasant manner; while, as it is, in the summer our hunting men are often at a loss what to do. Hunting must be as good a foundation on which to build outpost duties, as stalking on which to found skirmishing. A good hunting man must have a keen eye, a cool head, a steady seat, must exercise observation, intelligence, coolness; has many a dreary check to try his patience; must have health, strength, and great powers of endurance. No one of these qualities should be lacking to an officer on outpost duty.

The training of our Volunteer Cavalry should not, however, be restricted to this; the greater portion of them should be well armed and trained into mounted riflemen, taking Colonel Bowers' far too small corps of mounted riflemen as their model. The Marquis of Aylesbury has for a long time trained his Yeomanry to act as riflemen. It is well known that General Sheridan, with his 8,000 mounted riflemen—real dragoons—gave the *coup de grâce* to General

Lee, and thereby brought to a close the military career of that great man. I cannot mention the name of General Lee without a passing expression of regret at his death, and an expression of thankfulness that North and South agree in recognising in him the most illustrious Virginian save only Washington himself, an American of whom friend and whilom enemy may alike be proud. The Edinburgh Reviewer writes thus of what mounted riflemen might have done during the recent war:—

‘ If we are not greatly misinformed, there is the highest living authority—the authority of the most successful of the generals who have used this modified form of cavalry on a great scale—for an assertion that had the French early in this war trained up a mass of horsemen of the type of those that followed Sheridan, instead of devoting their whole means to the collection of masses of raw infantry and bad artillerymen, they might have so threatened the priceless line of railroad which fed the German host before Paris as to render a continual investment impossible.’

But this training in outpost duty should not

be restricted to our Yeomanry. The outpost work of infantry is different to that of cavalry, but not less important. Your intelligence and education, the leaven of sportsmen to be found in your ranks, admirably fit you for the performance of such duties. 'There is, perhaps, no duty so onerous or so exciting to the soldier as outpost work in front of a vigilant and active enemy;' it may be added, no work can be more difficult.

Sir W. Napier, when criticising General St. Cyr's report of his own operations in the north of Spain, after using the words, 'the best light troops in the world,' involuntarily, as it seems, adds, 'the best light troops are the best troops in the world.' At present we have enough to do with learning the new drill, and the use of the breechloader, together with the experiment we purpose making of learning to cook. But inasmuch as outpost and picquet duties can only be learned by actual practice, and even then can only be somewhat imperfectly learned at all during peace, I shall be delighted if we can give up a week to such duties alone.

If all be well, I shall direct your attention

in one or two lectures before long to the subject of outpost and picquet duties, together with that of light troops generally. I will only repeat the remark I have made before that, complete as have been the outpost arrangements of the Germans during the recent campaign, they have not been in the slightest degree more perfect than our own during the Peninsular War. We originally learned how to perform these scientific and important duties from the Hanoverians, and by the Hanoverians the Prussians also were taught. This fact is not only interesting to us generally, from the connection that has existed between England and Hanover, but this interest is enhanced by the fact that so many Scotsmen found service with and rose to high rank in the Hanoverian army. During the recent war, the Hanoverians seem to have thrown themselves heart and soul into the cause of Germany; nevertheless the fact will always remain that the expiring efforts of the Hanoverian army, fighting for the last time as the army of Hanover, were successfully directed against Prussia; for the worst of the two defeats suffered by Prussia in 1866 was that inflicted

on them by the Hanoverian army at Langensalza.

As to shelter-trench drill, I feel we cannot learn it, but necessary as it is that this work should be learned, there are other things still more necessary; moreover I do not know where we can learn how to perform the duty. But I take comfort from this fact, that if ever we are called upon to fight, I cannot conceive that we shall be left to ourselves; for I would ask, are soldiers better instructed in necessary, in essential military duties, than the Militia and Volunteers? Certainly.

Should the Reserve Forces be called upon to fight, will it be for the advantage of the country that they should be made as useful as possible? Undoubtedly. Will this best be attained by leaving them entirely by themselves, or by attaching to each regiment a certain number of better trained men? It cannot be questioned, I think, that the latter course would bring forth the most fruit of a good kind. Then surely it will be followed. The curse of our present system is that, because the Army, Militia, and Volunteers are dif-

ferently constituted, very little effort has been made to draw them together.*

If before our hour of trial comes a few well selected soldiers are attached to every Reserve regiment they will most materially assist in bringing out the value of the Reserve Forces. The sergeant-instructors attached to the Volunteer corps have proved of the greatest service; it would be money well laid out if a non-commissioned officer, being a pensioner, were attached to every company of Volunteers.

I cannot but say one word as to equipment and stores. We have a useful, plain uniform, suited for work, a plaid which will just turn a summer shower; we supply ourselves with boots, and therefore have ourselves to blame if they are not comfortable and well-fitting; I need hardly add, without such boots infantry work can hardly be done. Our accoutrements are not good; we have neither knapsack, blanket, great-coat, canteen, water-bottle—as to the latter no better will ever be made than that invented by Colonel

* It is announced that a few soldiers will be added to each Volunteer regiment going into the camp in Berkshire. If this principle is developed, much good will arise to the Volunteer service.

Cochrane. Not having these things, can we take the field? But I confess that it seems to me unreasonable that you should provide yourselves with these things. The authorities might decide on a pattern for each and all these things, and might have in store sufficient for all forces. Colonel the Hon. C. Lindsay has most wisely suggested that one pattern for all troops should be fixed, that sufficient to supply every single man who can be called upon to serve should always be in store, that all supplies should be issued from this store, and the deficiency created by the issue should at once be made good. Nothing can be wiser or sounder.

In conclusion, and as being on the point on which I am now speaking, I would direct your attention to an article in this month's *Blackwood*.* It is called the 'Battle of Dorking;' it is supposed to be spoken in 1920, and to give an account of a battle which took place in 1870, at which time this country fell an easy prey to the arms of Germany. I want each

* I think it well to remark that this lecture was delivered on May 4, and before the attention of the public had been directed to this most able 'Reminiscence.'

of you to read it. I do not much fear contradiction when I say that, whatever may be thought of its argument, however improbable the political and naval muddle into which the author plunges us, never has a more able, more interesting paper, appeared in any periodical in the world. I do not think there are many men qualified to give so good an account of a battle, or battles, if fought before their eyes; still fewer could draw upon their imagination with so completely perfect a result.

A soldier's heart, a professional pen, a patriot's courage, have all been engaged in drawing attention to the fact that what may come upon us need not come upon us, and will be our own fault if it does. No commissariat, no haversack or knapsack, no stores; a new unknown brigadier, contradictory orders; when food came not a kettle or cooking pot in the regiment, 'and we could not eat the meat raw;' brigade-major came to show colonel how to set a picquet, when actually within a few hours of contact with the enemy; no covering at night 'but a thin dust-coat;' we were 'like the

foolish virgins in the parable.* Please be sure to read it for yourselves; you can judge as well as I can whether the picture is drawn to life or is a caricature.

In conclusion, I ask you to ponder over two statements which I will now set before you:—‘In peace everything is kept ready for the mobilisation of the army; every officer and every official knows during peace what will be his post and duty the moment the decree for mobilisation is issued; and the moment the decree is telegraphed everyone sets about his necessary duty without requiring further orders or any explanations.’ This is the Prussian system. Alas that our system should be spoken of thus: ‘Of all the evils in the British Army, this is far the worst. Everything is unsettled; no man knows what the exact duty of his office is; no man clearly understands what his functions are—no exact war strength, no defined duties, no fixed responsibility.’ Our campaigns always begin in a muddle such as the Battle of Dorking exemplifies. What Sir W. Napier said of

* This is now so well known that I have curtailed what I spoke at the time.

Spain would apply to us, should invasion actually take place: 'The public treasure was scattered with heedless profusion; the din of preparation was heard in every department, but the bustle of confusion is easily mistaken for the activity of business.'

I finished my last lecture by exhorting you to realise what you may each do for your own particular regiment, to maintain its position, to guard its honour, to increase its efficiency. I would now conclude the course of lectures which I have given to you by appealing to you on yet higher, better, more important grounds. I do realise the importance and value of the regimental system, imperfect as ours is; it is the key-stone of our work; yet, for all that, there is something limited, contracted, and selfish in allowing our regiment to swallow up all our thoughts, energies, and powers. I ask you sometimes to look beyond it, and through it, to the service to which you belong, to the services of which your service is but a part, to the country which you are sworn to defend. War must ever be hateful; but the men who hate war most acknowledge that when a country is attacked, no higher

call of duty can ever devolve upon its sons than that they should fight, and, if need be, die for their country. No better, no truer method of defence can be found than preparation during peace. The day has for ever passed when any man can declare that the worst men make the best soldiers. 'Yet,' says Sir W. Napier, 'the late Lord Melville was not ashamed to declare in Parliament that the worst men made the best soldiers; and this odious, narrow-minded, and unworthy maxim had its admirers.'

The day is wellnigh passed in which a thoroughly good soldier will write: 'It is evident that the rank and file of an army does not really demand any high order of intelligence;' and the day will soon dawn when the opinion of the able, wise, ever-to-be-regretted author of 'The Tactical Retrospect' will be universally held—'In the wars of the future, the decisive element will not be brute force, but rather intellect (*Geist*), not only on the part of the leader, but from him down to the last soldier, and each individual will weigh in the scale according to the whole value of his intellectual individuality.' You are helping to bring intellect, cultivation, individuality to

bear on the defence of the country; you are doing this at a cost of personal self-sacrifice and self-denial; you bear individually no small portion of the actual cost which is necessary to maintain the force; from this work of patriotic self-denial no ridicule, no scoffing, no jealousy will ever turn you; few Volunteers are opposed to compulsory service, for that which would be demanded from those drawn by the ballot would not greatly exceed that which has been cheerfully and ungrudgingly given by you. It is difficult, it may be of doubtful wisdom, it may be impossible to forecast the future; the country *may* learn to disregard the amount of taxation imposed upon it; *may* think herself wiser than Germany, Russia, or France; *may* even despise the example set by these nations, and *may* enrol young 'paupers, and thieves, and roughs;' and not much caring about expenditure, may enrol so many of these boys as in her wisdom she may think able to cope with the trained manhood of the continental nations; but none of this do I believe is likely to occur.

On the other hand, she may look 'across the narrow straits,' and read 'the writing on the

wall;' may restore a local army to India, and thus render it possible to 'secure the defence of the nation by enforced arming of its manhood.' This I do believe is probable; and so firmly do I believe it, that I think if another year passes and the foundations for such a wise, unselfish, cheap, natural, righteous, and patriotic course remain unlaid by Parliament, it should be earnestly debated whether a National Defence Association should not be formed, in order to effect for drill and discipline that which the National Rifle Association has done for shooting.

This England never did (nor never shall)
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror
But when it first did help to wound itself.
Nought shall make us rue
If England to itself do rest but true.

